



A PUBLIC HOME

EXPLORING THE ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY
TO SUPPORT THE PATH OUT OF HOMELESSNESS

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MASTER THESIS AT CHALMERS ARCHITECTURE
MPDSD / DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
03.06.2016



CHALMERS

A PUBLIC HOME
ANDREAS MØLLER NIELSEN 2016

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FAR FROM BEING

IRRELEVANT artistic expression, architecture and urban planning are manifestations of social, economic and political structures in society.

This Master Thesis builds on the urbanist view that a strong relation exists between physical space and civic life.

From this point of view it is a strong belief that architectural design and urban planning does not just resonate the current society, but have the ability to reshape society.

This puts architects and urban planners in a position of power and responsibility, a power and responsibility that demand an approach based on ethics and inclusion.

THANKS TO..

MALIN ÖSTLING, ULLA EKMAN and the Social Resources at Gothenburg Municipality for your fruitful collaboration, openness and for trusting me with the first attempt at the task of designing a centre against homelessness in Gothenburg.

ROBERT JOHANSSON for your openness, strong visions and for taking me around Gothenburg to meet all those good people living in challenging situations.

ANNIKA STRÖM ÖBERG, EVA ERLANDSSON and Rådningssmissionen
LENNART FORSBERG and Stadsmissionen
SARAH BRIZ AND Faktum
MIKAEL CHRONA, LARS-GUNNAR KRANTZ and the Property Committee at Gothenburg Municipality
..for your open doors and inspiring words.

EMILIO BRANDBAO and **JOAQUIM TARRASO** for all your support, guidance and for always showing me new perspectives.

All the participants at the two presentations arranged by Social Resources for all your feedback.

And to you **KAREN HÖSTMARK** for all your support and all the good discussions we had.

THIS MASTER THESIS

explore the architectural typology as a tool for supporting the path out of homelessness and blurring social inequalities in Gothenburg. It strives to inspire a new relationship between the city and its homeless population.

In today's Scandinavia many are forced to a life in homelessness. In Oslo young people are occupying empty municipal buildings, in Copenhagen we see an increase in young people who are living on the street, and in Stockholm EU migrants are looking for work whilst living on the street. How can we come to terms with homelessness and learn to include the ones who fall outside our picture of a good society?

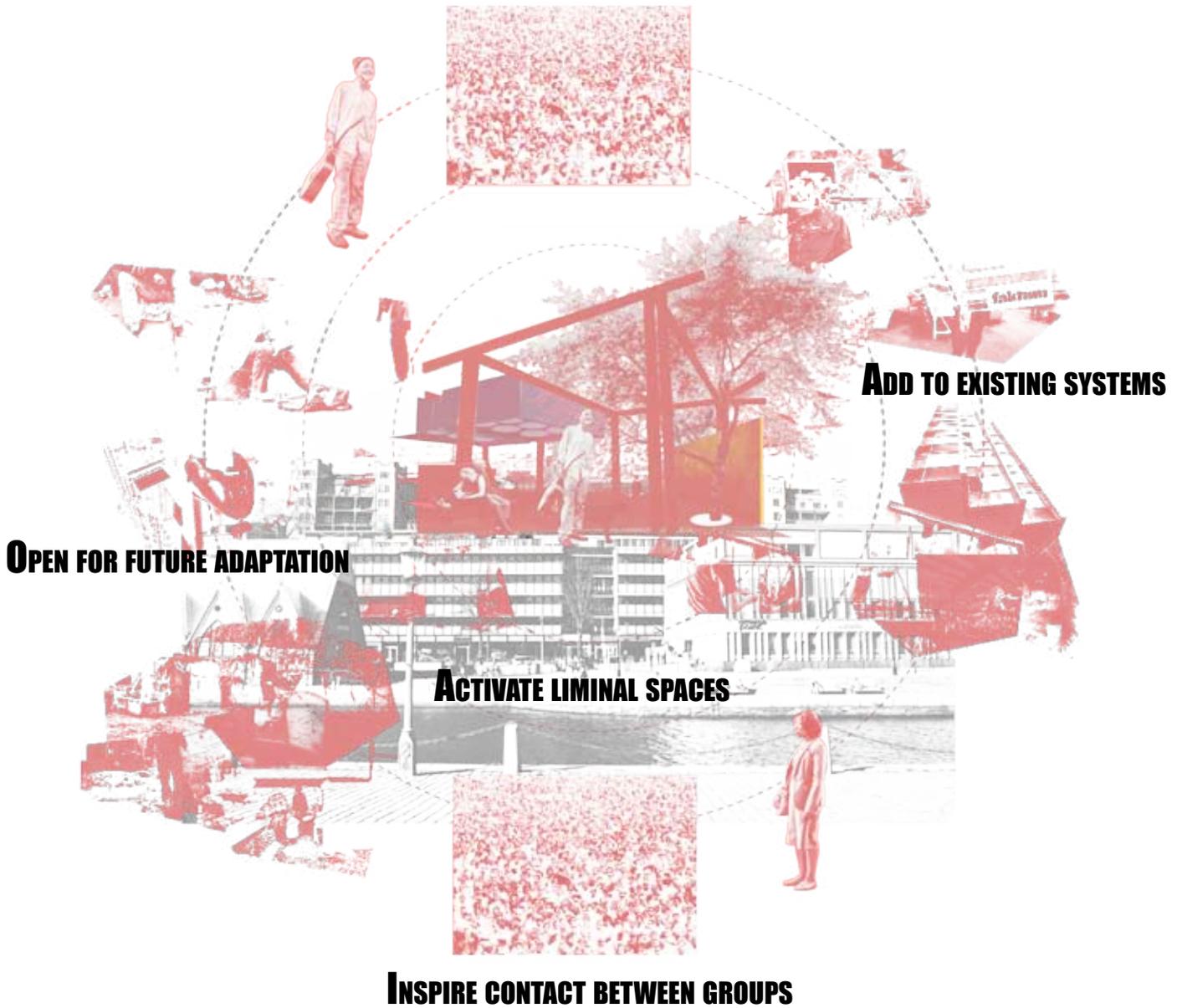
This master thesis is not a proposal for social housing for people in homelessness. It puts focus on the part of the solution that lays before and after housing. It is a centre against homelessness, loneliness and social exclusion.

Combining the privacy and safety of the home and the openness and flexibility of the public space this project will be a base for belonging and a pivot for social contact. It will take departure in a neglected park, a plateau on the old fortress wall in centre of Gothenburg.

The method used is based on research for design and builds on explorations ranging from rough sleeping in public to interviewing and collaborating with the municipality and the NGO's supporting people in homelessness.

The result adds to the discussion on contemporary urban development through merging social intervention with urban infill. How can an architectural typology support the path out of homelessness?

DESIGN FOR MARGINALIZED GROUPS



THE VISION OF THE PROJECT IS TO
CREATE A PLATFORM FOR SUPPORT AND FOR SOCIAL
INCLUSION OF PEOPLE LIVING IN HOMELESSNESS.
A PLAYGROUND FOR BLURRING INEQUALITIES
AND PREJUDICE BETWEEN SOCIAL GROUPS IN
GOTHENBURG.

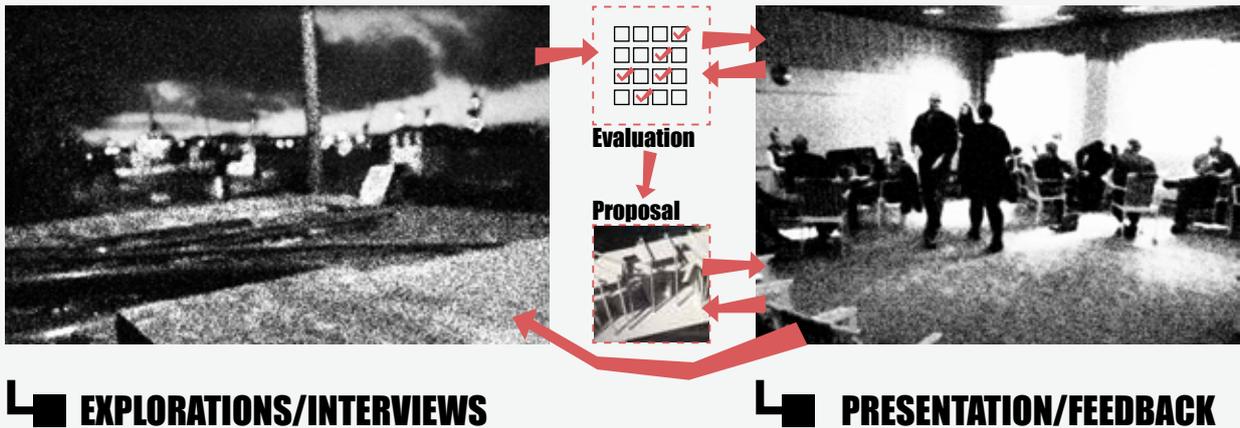
**HOW CAN
AN ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY
SUPPORT THE PATH OUT OF HOMELESSNESS?**

**WHAT FACTORS
ARE RELEVANT IN THE DESIGN
AGAINST HOMELESSNESS?**

**WHAT ROLE
CAN ARCHITECTS PLAY IN THE SOCIAL INCLUSION
OF PEOPLE LIVING IN HOMELESSNESS?**

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THE APPROACH IS

ANCHORED in research for design and based on involvement. It moves through iterative stages of explorations, evaluation, proposal and feedback. The three explorations look at challenges in a life on the street, the redefinition of a home and the relevant factors to support the path out of homelessness. It is based on experience-based research, empirical and qualitative research. Through this method a broad insight into the field and a high level of involvement of stakeholders is gained.



Image#1: Bench in Rosenlund, Gothenburg (Daniel Gillberg, 2015)

IN RECENT YEARS it has become clear that the raising number of homeless in Scandinavia is not merely a cause of individual struggling. It is a sign of failure of the formal society. We are experiencing housing shortages, Housing prices are through the roof and migration within the EU is giving new challenges.

Homelessness is taking a new form. Families, children, men and women of various backgrounds and with various challenges and needs are facing homelessness today. We need to find new ways to address this complexity. We need to find ways to cope with the existing challenges and to adapt to future changes of situation.

The purpose of this Master Thesis is three fold. One is to explore how architects can approach the complexity of homelessness, two is to investigate important factors for designing against homelessness, and third is to investigate how an architectural typology can inspire social change in the segregated city of Gothenburg.

The image above is a local example of design against marginalized groups. This particular bench was a part of a conflict with a skateboard community but it also limits other groups. It is a defensive design solution that counters skating as well as sleeping in public. It is in a sense a way to design "good" urban space for all by designing out certain unwanted people. Is that an ethical approach to urban design?



Image#2: Homelessness (Räddningsmissionen, 2015)



Image#3: Walking men in the city (Christian Mueller, 2014)

SWEDES IN HOMELESSNESS

EU-MIGRANTS IN HOMELESSNESS

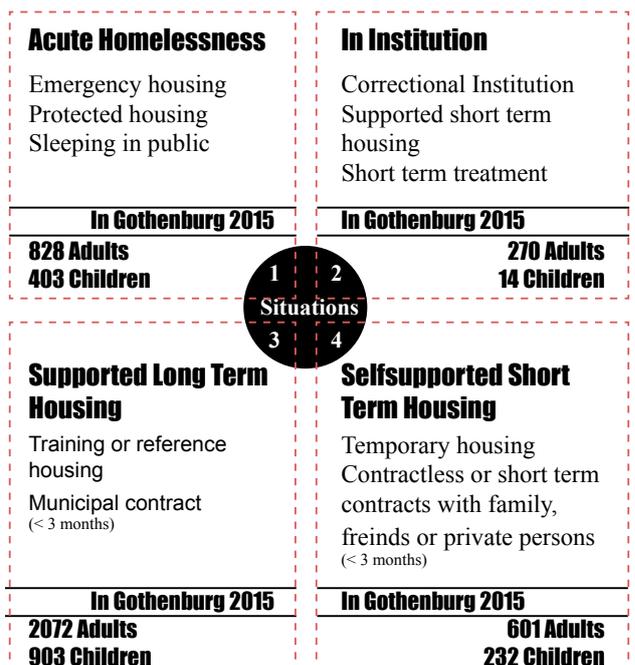
THE GENERAL PUBLIC

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

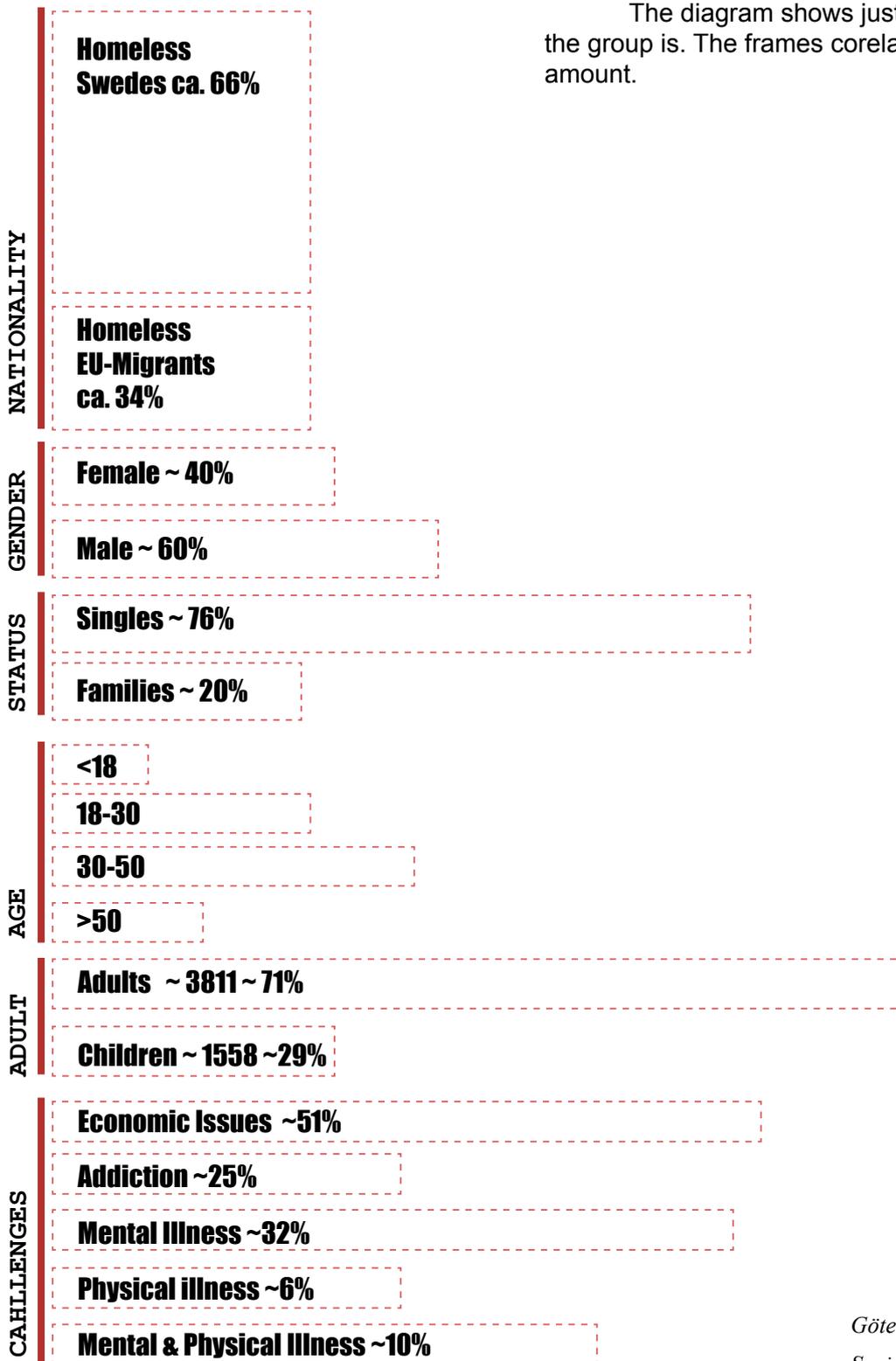
People in homelessness are not middle-aged Swedish men who chose a life outside the norm. It is a wide range of people in various situations. The diagram is showing the four situations that the social authorities use to define homelessness. In addition to this the people in risk of eviction and homeless EU-migrants are also included in the focus group.

TARGET SITUATIONS OF HOMELESSNESS

- People In Risk of Eviction**
- People in Homelessness (Sit. 1-2)**
- People on the Way Out of Homelessness (Sit. 3-4)**



[http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/hemloshet/omfattning/definition\(09.03.16\)](http://www.socialstyrelsen.se/hemloshet/omfattning/definition(09.03.16))



The diagram shows just how diverse the group is. The frames correlate to the statistic amount.

Göteborg Stad (2015)
Socialstyrelsen (2011)



Image#4: Social Resources (Gothenburg Municipality, 2015)



Image#5: Räddningsmissionen (Räddningsmissionen, 2016)

SOCIAL RESOURCES, GOTHENBURG MUNICIPALITY

Goal: An equal Gothenburg where no one is forced to live in homelessness

Tools: Outreach, activation, counselling, rehabilitation, temporary housing, Supported permanent housing, housing first.

Role: As a top down planning body Gothenburg social resources strategize and distribute municipal funds. They collaborate with other nongovernmental actors within the field such as Räddningsmissionen, Frälsningsarmen, Stadsmissionen and Bräcke Diakoni etc. They have been given the task of establishing a centre against homelessness

IMPACT ON PROJECT.

Information, inspiration, feedback

RÄDDNINGSMISSIONEN, GOTHENBURG

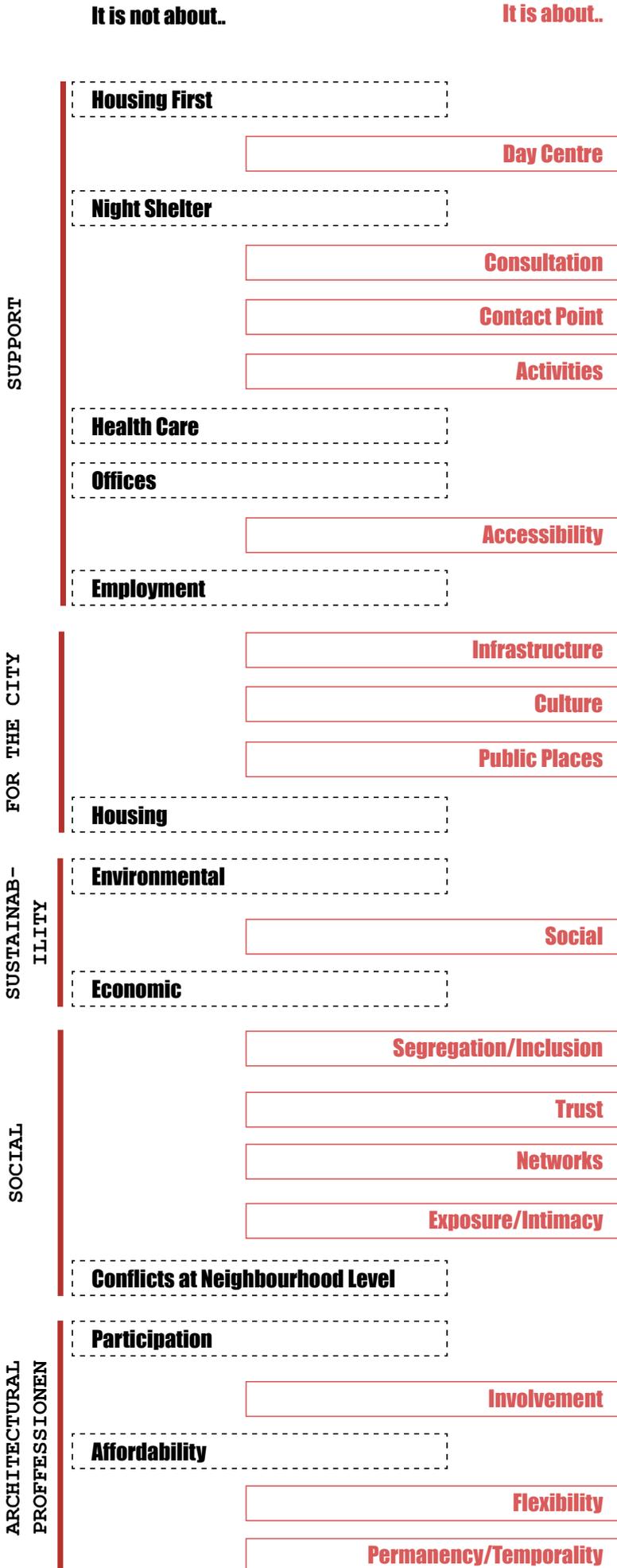
Goal: To recognize and counter the social conditions that lead to, and aggravate vulnerability and exclusion.

Tools: Outreach, activation, night sheltering, temporary housing,

Role: As an NGO Räddningsmissionen can support who and how they find best. They provide a large network of support for various socially vulnerable groups including people in homelessness. As things are now they are the main collaborator for the social resources task to establish a centre against homelessness.

IMPACT ON PROJECT.

Information, inspiration, feedback and visits to site of rough camping.





The Presence of the Proposal in the Neighbourhood

TOWARDS THE HOMELESS

TO CREATE A FREE AND SAFE PLACE FOR ALL PEOPLE IN HOMELESSNESS.

- Inspire meetings and allow separation
- Open for 24 hour use
- Open for all cultural backgrounds

TOWARDS THE PUBLIC

TO CREATE A PLATFORM AGAINST SEGREGATION, STIGMA AND EXCLUSION.

- A leveller between people
- Attracting various groups
- Dignifying common ground

TO ACT AS A CENTRE POINT FOR A LARGE NETWORK OF SUPPORT.

- Accessible and well connected
- Connecting the person and the supporting network
- Offer supporting daily activities

TO ACT AS A THIRD PLACE AND A PUBLIC DOMAIN FOR A WIDE RANGE OF PEOPLE.

- Offer a wide range of places
- Open and flexible
- Low threshold



6 THE NEW PUBLIC PLACE

“In a way the challenge is more for us (the general public) than for them (people in homelessness). We need to find ways to accept them and meet them as they are. They are excluded from the public spaces so we need a type of space they feel that they can take.”

THE “NEW PUBLIC PLACE”

above the cultural room is an extension of the street in the treetops and provides views over the city below. The structure defines the space and provides the possibility to hang lamps, cinema canvas or cover for rain. The square can act as a platform for encounters on the terms of the target group. Activities can extend to the square from the building below.

MALIN ÖSTLING
 Head of Operations
 Housing and Social Services
 Social Resources Göteborg

THEORY



THE INTERGROUP CONTACT THEORY

is a social psychological hypothesis that propose the reduction of prejudice between groups through contact between members of groups. Formulated in the 1950's it has been developed to include a wide range of direct and indirect contacts. The contact should be as frictionless as possible and a third party could be introduced as a mediator between the two groups.

Allport puts up conditions for the contact: Equal status, Cooperation, Common goals and Support by social and institutional authorities.

This theory is found relevant in terms of the program, connection between functions and spatial design. The typology is not for one group only. It is a typology for contact. Spaces vary in size, access and atmosphere to inspire a range of contact situations.

VISUAL CONTACT

IN A ROOM TOGETHER

UNDER A ROOF TOGETHER

ON A BENCH TOGETHER

IN THE SAME BUILDING

Gordon Allport (1954)



IN THE BOOK IN SEARCH OF A NEW PUBLIC DOMAIN

(2001) M. Hajer, A. Reijndorp are discussing the design and quality of contemporary public space. In this strategies towards a new public domain is put forward. Fences for public access is a strategy that propose subdividing public spaces into domains to allow access for multiple groups. Space for marginality is discussing the systematical exclusive design and planning practices towards homeless people. In the strategy Liminal spaces the social and cultural importance of in-between spaces are put forward.

This is found relevant to the design, vision and location of this project.

MULTIPLE DOMAINS

DESING FOR MARGINALITY

USE URBAN BORDERS

M. Hajer, A. Reijndorp (2001)



THE URBAN SOCIOLOGIST, RAY OLDENSBURG COINED THE TERM “THE THIRD PLACE”

as he describes the importance of the informal public meeting place to democracy and civic life. The first place is the home, the second is the work place and the third is social gathering place. In his book *The Great Good Place* (1989) he puts forward guidelines for the quality and function of the third place. These guidelines are used in the formulation of the design criteria.

Important factors for design of the third place

ON NEUTRAL GROUND

VERY ACCESSIBLE

CONVERSATION IS THE MAIN ACTIVITY

THE REGULARS

A LOW PROFILE

A PLAYFUL MOOD

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

A LEVELER

Ray Oldenburg (1989)

EXPLORATIONS





IN NOVEMBER THREE NIGHTS WERE SPENT ROUGH SLEEPING

in Gothenburg. The goal was to explore the physical and mental challenges in a life lived in public on the street. How does it feel to call the public realm your home? It was expected to be challenging in terms of exposure to the weather and the perceived safety, but loneliness, boredom and spatial exclusion proved to be very important aspects as well. Notes were taken every second hour and the experience was concluded in a short film clip telling the story of the Three Nights Out. This experience-based research created a knowledge base, which the project and the further research grew from.

CHALLENGES ON THE STREET

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

EXPOSED TO THE WEATHER

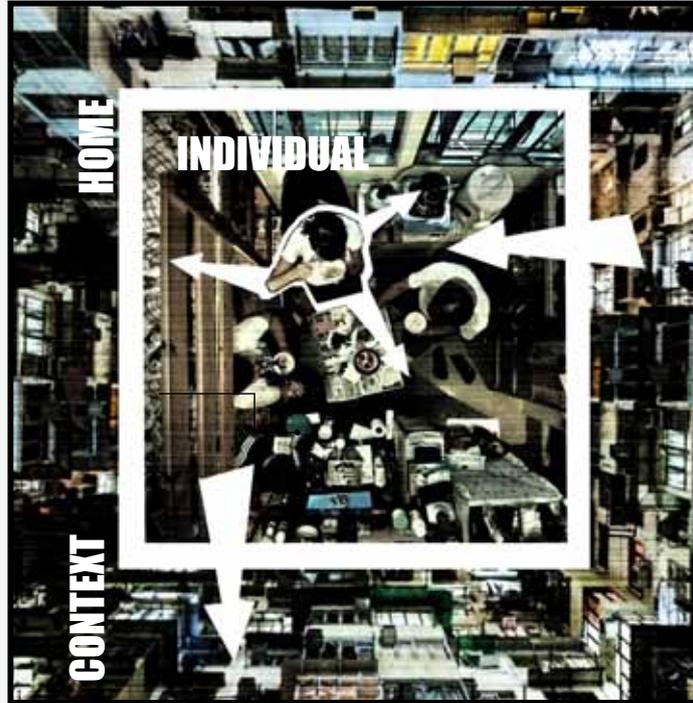
SOCIAL STIGMATISATION

TIME

LONELINESS

ACCESSING FOOD AND WATER

ACCESSING SANITATION



TO UNDERSTAND HOMELESSNESS

the notion of home was explored. The quote by Segal and Baumohl (1988) define the home as safe base where emotion and space intertwine and connects into what we call home. Can this be applicable in the design of public or shared spaces? And what factors are relevant? This exploration looks at the mental and physical need of home by reinterpreting the most basic physical elements of the home into wider terms (see appendix page 70-71). These terms will then help to create the base for the design criteria. This exploration was an empirical research, which was based on images of basic micro homes that show the needs and not the wants of a home.

THE NOTION OF HOME

HEALTH

SECURITY

OWNERSHIP

CULTURE

RECREATION

STABILITY

IDENTITY

"A HOME EXISTS WHERE SENTIMENT AND SPACE CONVERGE TO AFFORD ATTACHMENT, STABILITY AND A SECURE SENSE OF PERSONAL CONTROL. IT IS AN ABIDING PLACE AND A WEB OF TRUSTWORTHY CONNECTIONS, AN ANCHOR OF IDENTITY AND SOCIAL LIFE, THE SEAT OF INTIMACY AND TRUST FROM WHICH WE PURSUE OUR EMOTIONAL AND MATERIAL NEEDS."

Segal, S. P., & Baumohl, J. (1988)



Image#6: Support (Räddningsmission, 2015)

TO GET AN INSIGHT IN HOW TO SUPPORT

individuals on the path out of homelessness, an exploration was carried out looking into the existing support network. This was done through interviewing supporting organisations in Gothenburg. What challenges do they see in the support against homelessness? And what role can a centre against homelessness play in the future support? Key aspects that are found relevant to the design criteria are put forward here and notes from the interviews can be found in appendix.

FACTORS FOR SUPPORT

OPEN FOR ALL

ACCESSIBLE

ATTRACTIVE

TACKLING THE PROBLEM BEHIND

SEEING THE INDIVIDUAL AS A WHOLE

FOCUS ON THE PERSONS QUALITIES

FLEXIBILITY

Interviewees

-MALIN ÖSTLING, Head of Operations, Housing and Social Services, Gothenburg Municipality.

-ANNIKA STRÖM ÖBERG, Head of Operations, Homelessness, Räddningsmission Gothenburg.

-ROBERT JOHANSSON, Homelessness Coordinator, Räddningsmission Gothenburg, Earlier Homeless.

-LENNART FORSBERG, Social Director, Stadsmissionen Gothenburg.

-SARAH BRITZ, Editor in chief, Faktum Gothenburg.

-MIKAEL CHRONA & LARS-GUNNAR KRANTZ, Development Leaders, Property Committee, Gothenburg Municipality.

PRESENCE

- └■ Open
- └■ Sense Activities & Presence

FLEXIBLE

- └■ Multifunctional
- └■ Open for Future Needs

SENSITIVE

- └■ Qualities of the Site
- └■ Needs of the User

PROTECTIVE

- └■ Wind and Weather
- └■ Secure for all Users

CONNECTING

- └■ Accessible
- └■ Exposure to Others
- └■ Division of space

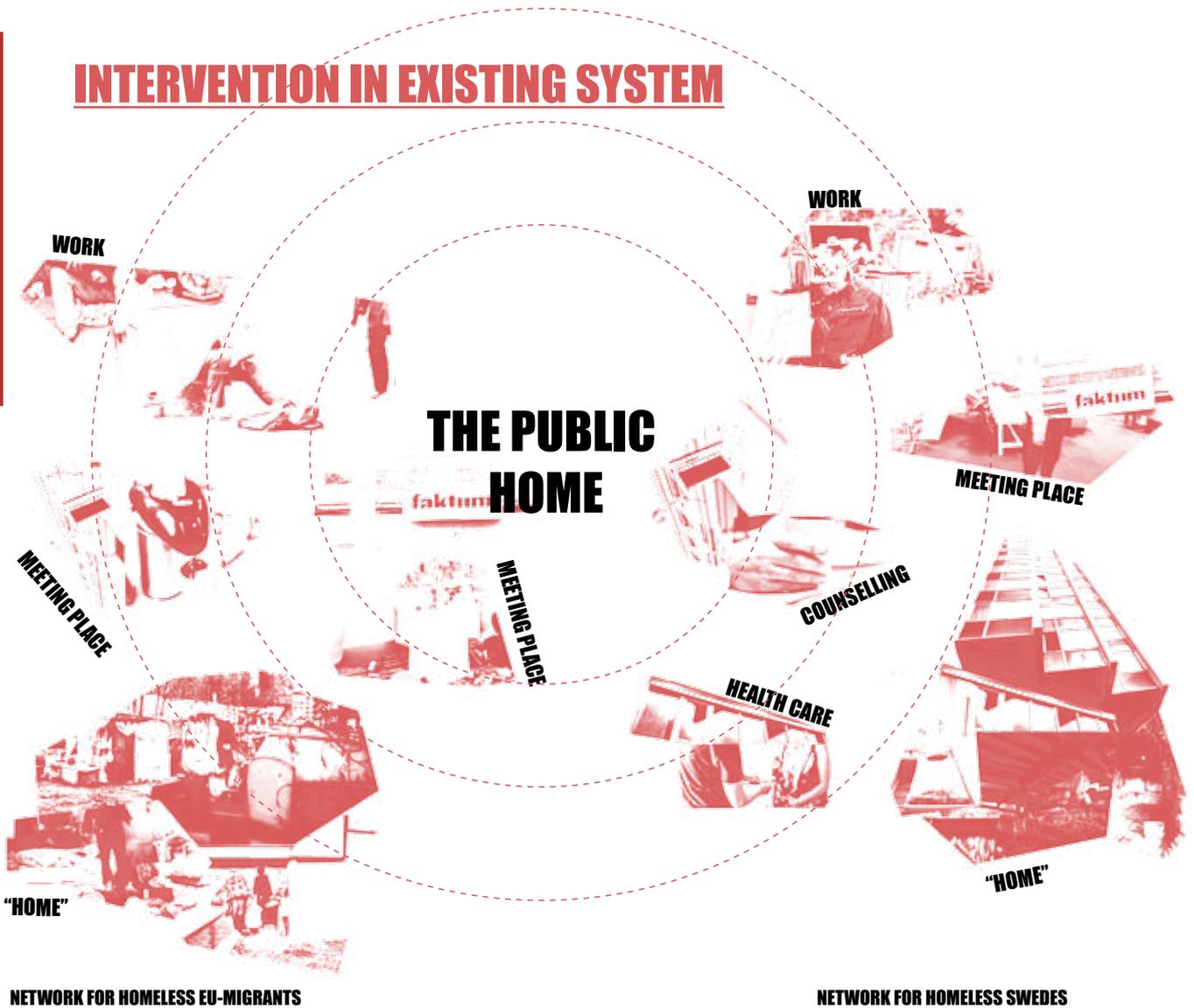
URBAN & INTIMATE

- └■ Public & Robust
- └■ Small Spaces
- └■ Low Threshold

STRATEGY



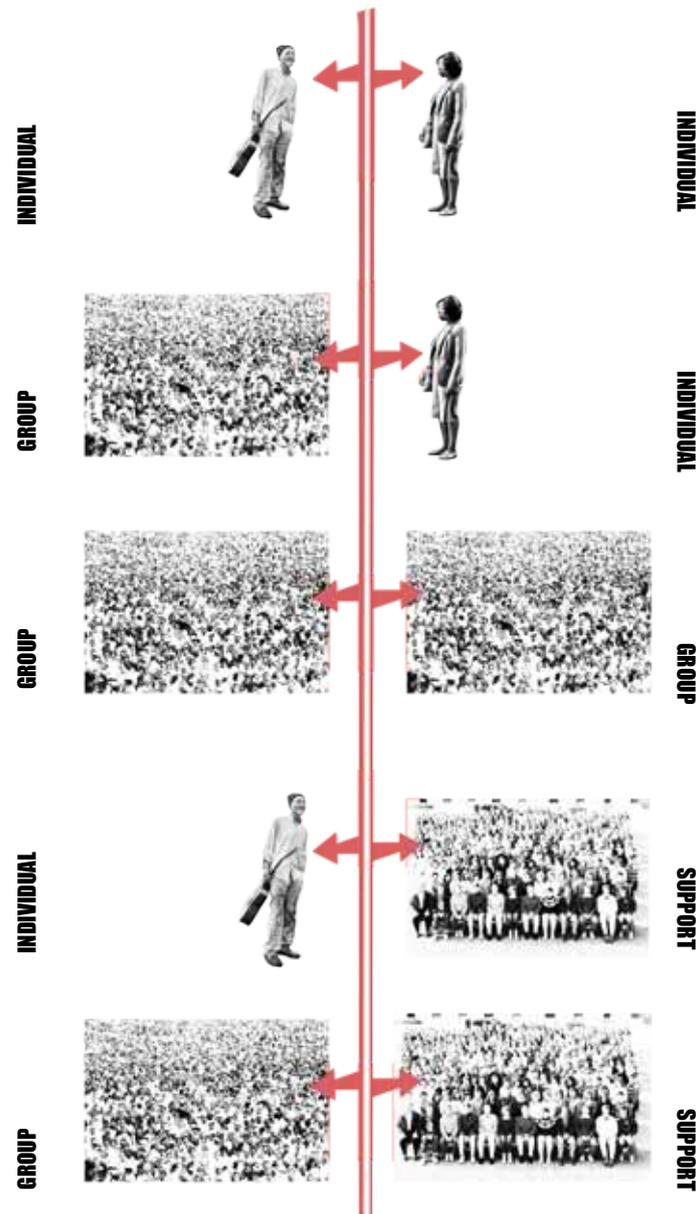
INTERVENTION IN EXISTING SYSTEM



TO COUNTER EXCLUSION, STIGMA AND LONELINESS

the question of location is crucial. The project aims to break with the pattern of misplacement. Challenged groups are often placed in challenged areas (Andersson J. and Darj K., 2014). To counter this trend the project proposes an investment for a marginalized in the city centre.

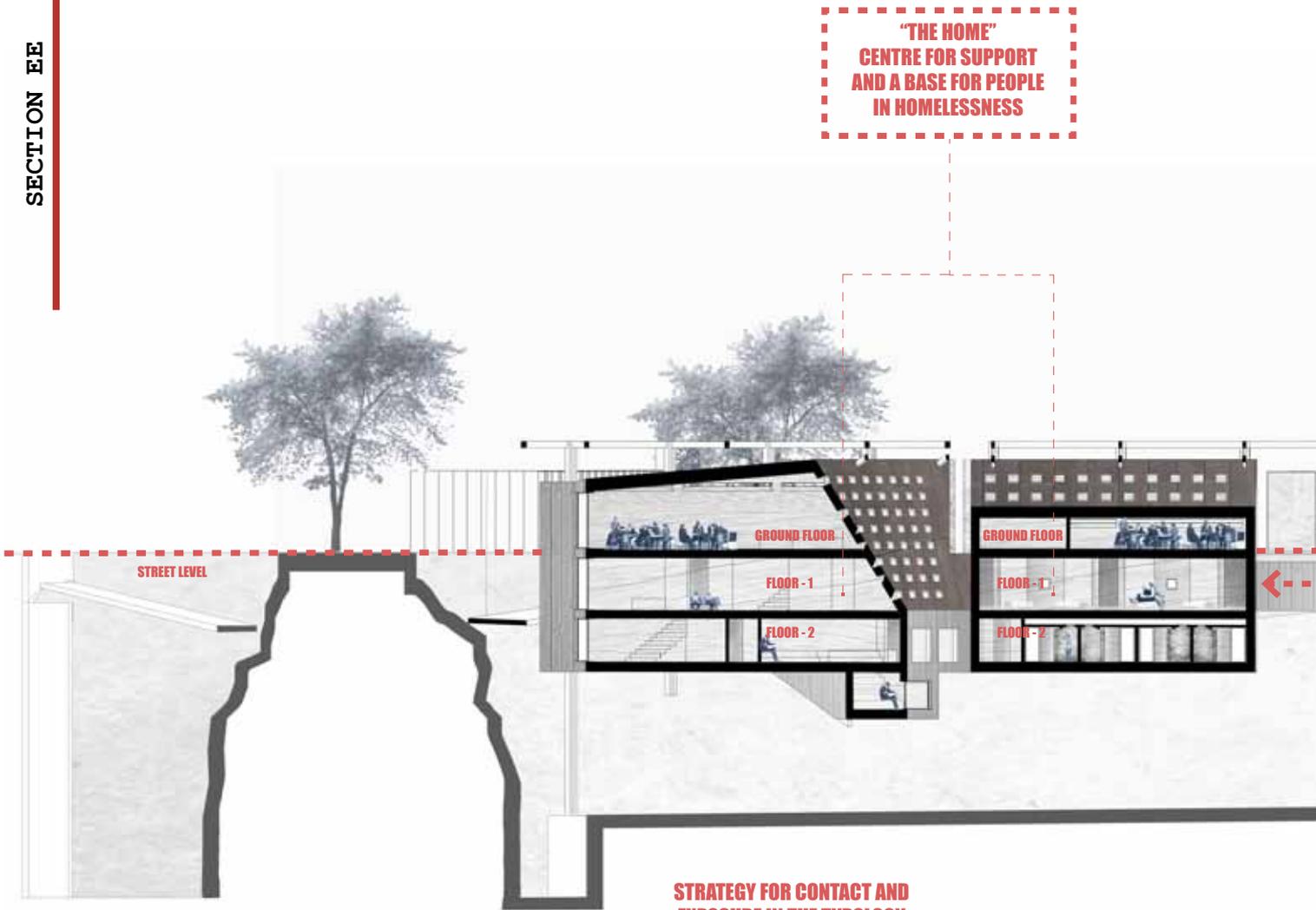
This will create a new centre in the existing support and act as a pivot from where the network can grow. Centralized support for people in homelessness not only enhances accessibility and inclusion but it will also act as a manifestation. It will state that Gothenburg is investing in its social challenges and is creating permanent solutions to permanent challenges. This can place Gothenburg as a forerunner in the work against homelessness.



BASED ON THE INTERGROUP THEORY

the proposal will counter prejudice and segregation by mediating interaction between individuals, groups and the support. It will act as a platform for contact and exposure across social groups and can be the starting point of a new inclusive urban culture where challenged individuals can gain a foothold in the public realm and create a culture on their own terms.

To create an environment for encounters in a diverse group and between groups of various social statuses can create conflict. Therefore it sets demands on the support and the building to mediate the exposure. The strategy for the building is to create a gradient of domains between inside and outside, private and public and closed and open. The goal is to create a large variety of atmospheric environments for various levels of encounters.



STRATEGY FOR CONTACT AND ENDSIDE IN THE TVDRIAEV

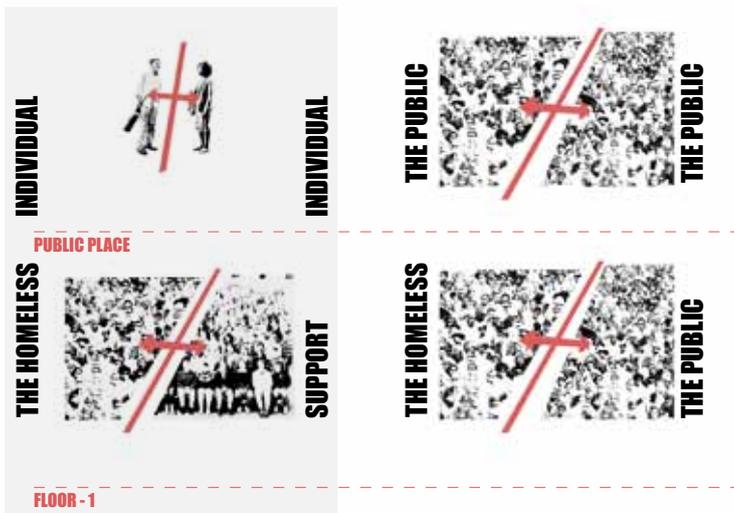
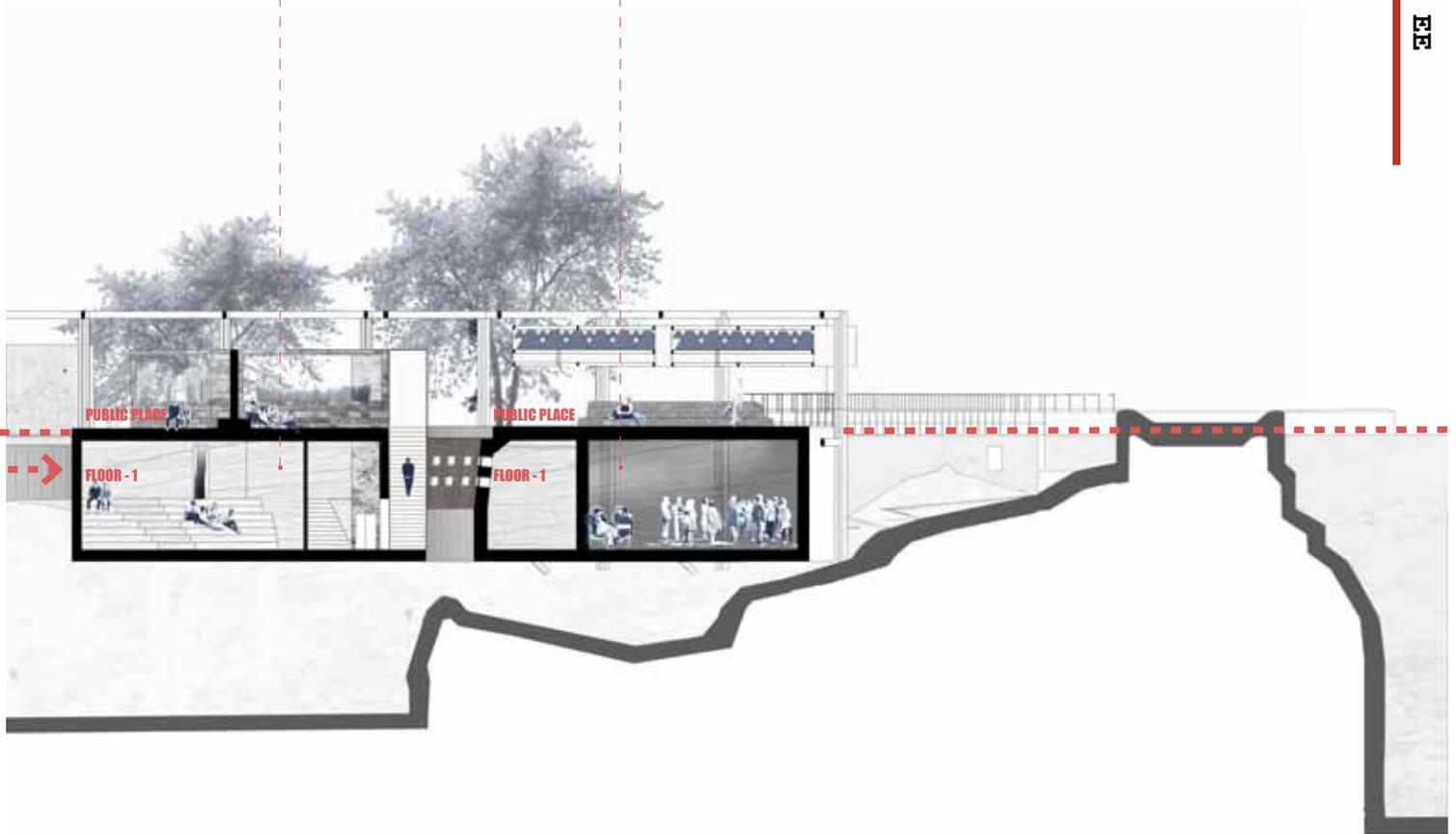
THE PROPOSAL IS A SAFE BASE FOR PEOPLE IN HOMELESSNESS

and a centre for culture and exposure between social groups. Most of the added program is under street level and smaller public spaces are extended from the street towards the view. To the west the "home" is the main centre against homelessness. It provides a wide range of spatial atmospheres for consultation, recreation and in-group contact. To the east the "Stair Room" and the "Culture Hall" are for in-group and intergroup contact. This part is for courses, lectures, workshops and theatre for the people in homelessness but can on event basis double as cultural space for the general public. The goal with this is to create a positive attraction and association for the general public towards the building and the people in homelessness.



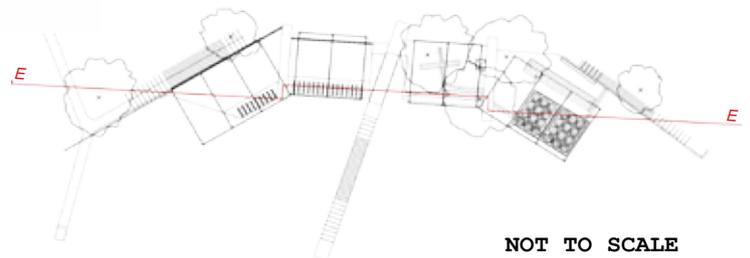
THE STAIR ROOM
CENTRE FOR
SUPPORTIVE COURSES
AND CULTURE

"THE CULTURE"
CENTRE FOR CULTURE,
GATHERINGS AND
WORKSHOPS.



THE PROJECT AIMS TO BE A LEVELLER

between social groups in Gothenburg. It will be a centre against homelessness and a centre for social urban life. The project places itself in the centre of an existing support network to shorten the distance between the user and help. It will try to balance the spaces for satisfying personal needs and spaces for public use.



NOT TO SCALE

PUBLIC**PUBLIC PLACE**

- └■ Recreation / Culture
- └■ Public domain
- └■ New connections

**THEATRE / MUSIC HALL
/ WORKSHOP
/ PRAYER ROOM**
HOMELESS BASE**HOME SUPPORT**

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| └■ Storage | └■ Consultation |
| └■ Recreation | └■ Lecture hall |
| └■ Security | └■ Living room |
| └■ Health | └■ 24 hour coffee |
| └■ Toilets | └■ Night room |
| └■ Showers | |
| └■ Postal address | |
| └■ Kitchen | |

PERSONNEL**OFFICES**

- └■ Meeting Room
- └■ Consultation

THE PROGRAM WAS DEVELOPED

through interviews and discussions with the Social Resources and the supporting organisations. Parts of the program proposed by the social resources have been left out for future development. Future focus should be put on the design of a Restaurant/ Café, Offices and Health Care. These could be placed on the rooftop of or in the adjacent office building.

The development of the program has been a continuous process that led to focusing on the margin between public program and program directed towards the people in homelessness. The goal has been to create a flowing and flexible use of the building. The distribution of program can be found with the plans on page 52-59.



6 THE CULTURE ROOM

“We need a wide range of activities. We need everything from a safe place for social interaction to some kind of protected work options. Anything that offer a social network and is meaningful for the individual to feel as a part of society. It is important. Just as important as it is for you to go to school and for me to go to work. We need some kind of social context.”

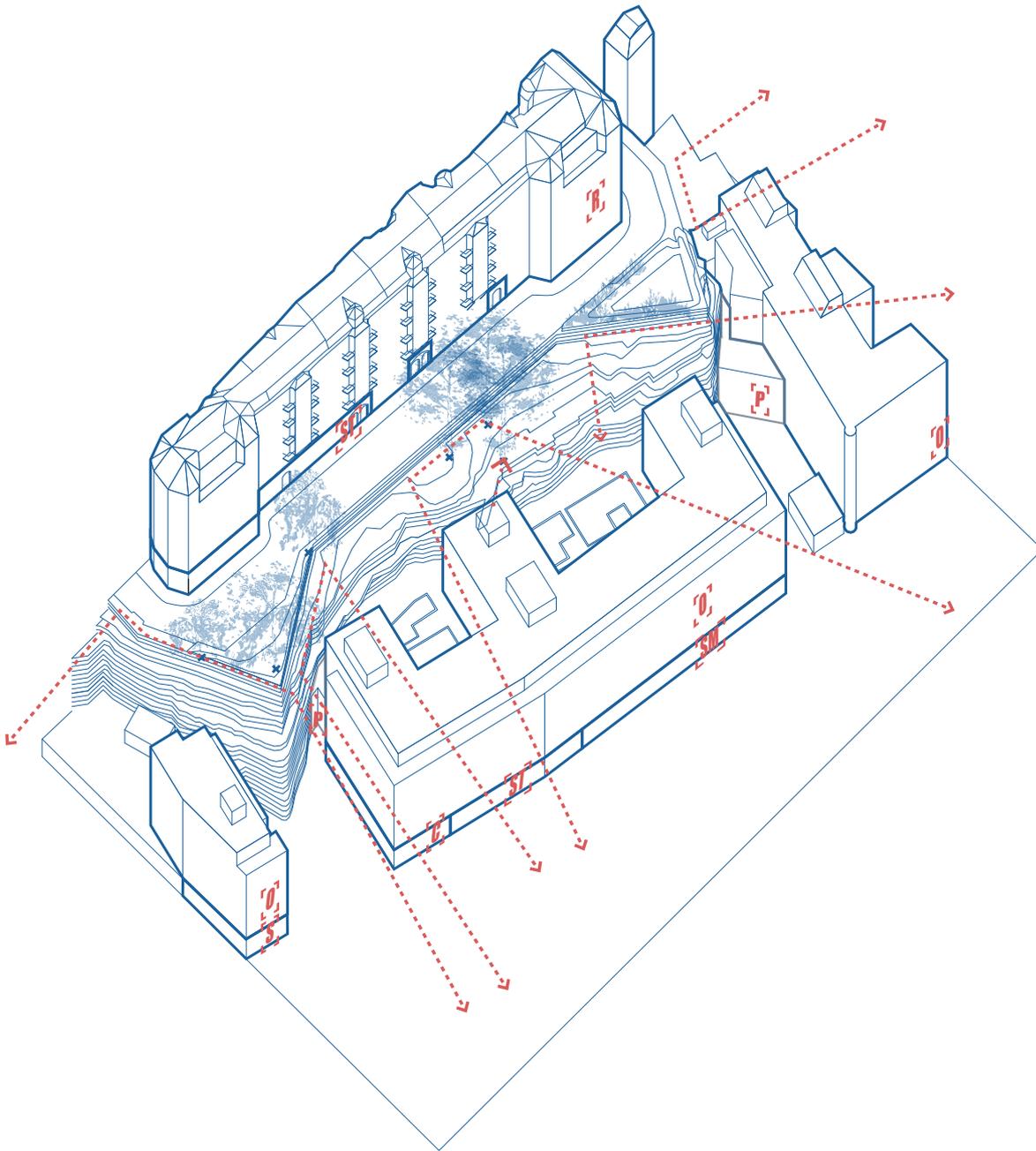
THE CULTURE HALL is a simple and flexible room that is used for arts, music, workshops, prayer room and theatre. It is for activities that span across social groups and create positive association between the people in homelessness and the public and for activities that can put focus on homelessness as a societal challenge. This can be organised by the people in homelessness, the supporting organisations or cultural organisations. The old fortress wall is brought into the room and connects to the historic site.

LENNART FORSBERG
Social Director
Stadsmissionen Göteborg

THE SITE







THE SITE IS A PRIVATE PARK

on a long narrow terrace along the old fortress wall, 4-8 meters down from Arsenalgatan. It is a denied and invisible site that has a very strong character. In many ways the site resemble the situation that many find themselves in as homeless. There is much potential in this site, it offers opportunity to extend the street towards the view and a public space in the treetops. There is also a potential to connect to the neighbouring roof and the streets and courtyards below. Today the site is only accessible by a bridge from the neighbouring office building. It is central yet hidden in a liminal space between residential and office buildings.

- ST Stores
- SM Supermarket
- S Sushi
- R Residential
- O Offices
- C Cafe
- P Parking
- Current Access to Site
- Sight Lines
- X Retained Trees

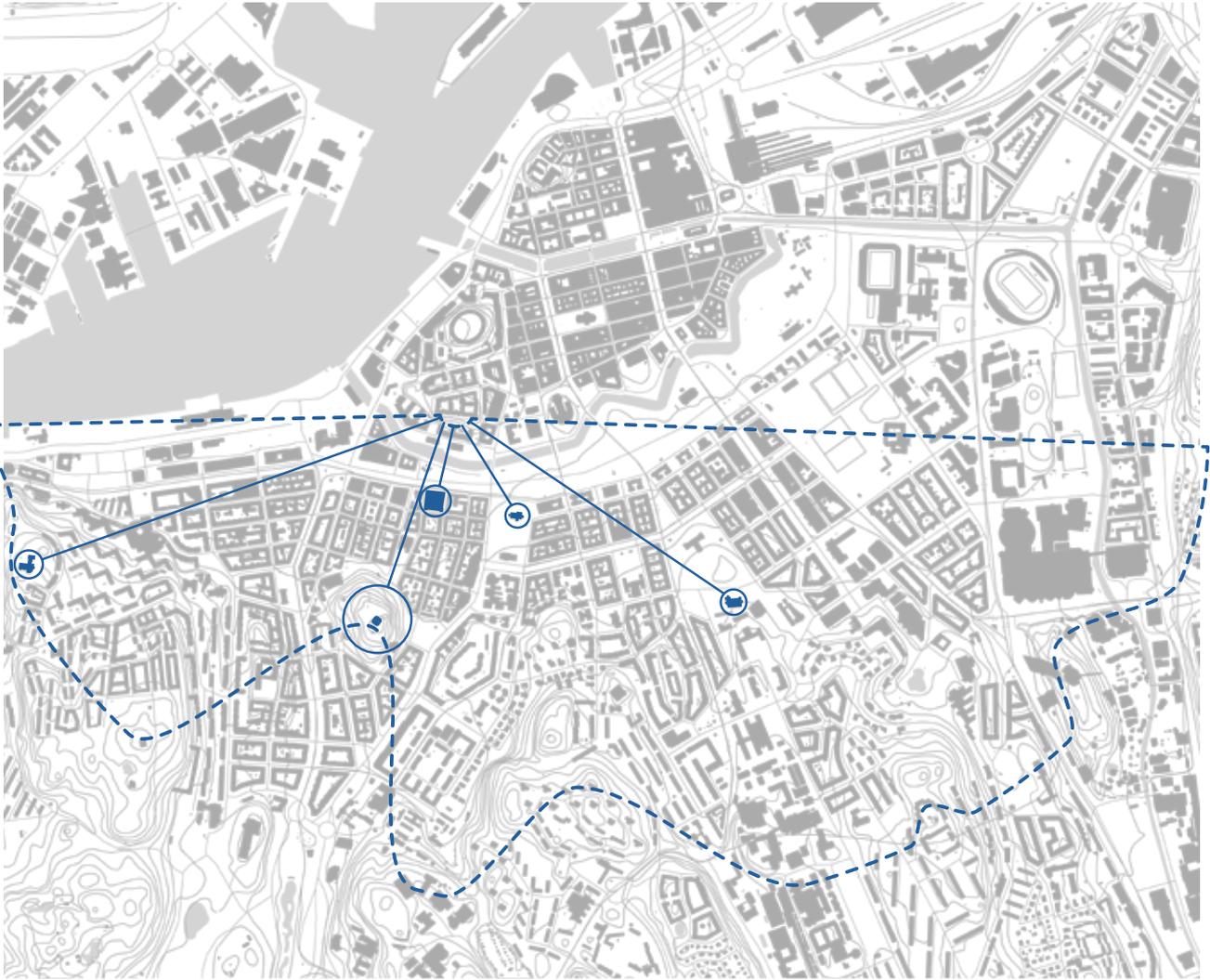


NOT TO SCALE

THE SITE IS CENTRALLY LOCATED

within the old city moat of Gothenburg. It is situated close to four well-connected tram stops and within walking distance of much of the central network of support.

- S Skeppsbron Tramstop
- G Grönsagstorget Tramstop
- H Hagakyrkan Tramstop
- J Järntorget tramstop
- Distance (500 meters)
- Network for the Homeless
- ⤴ Walking Distance
- Access



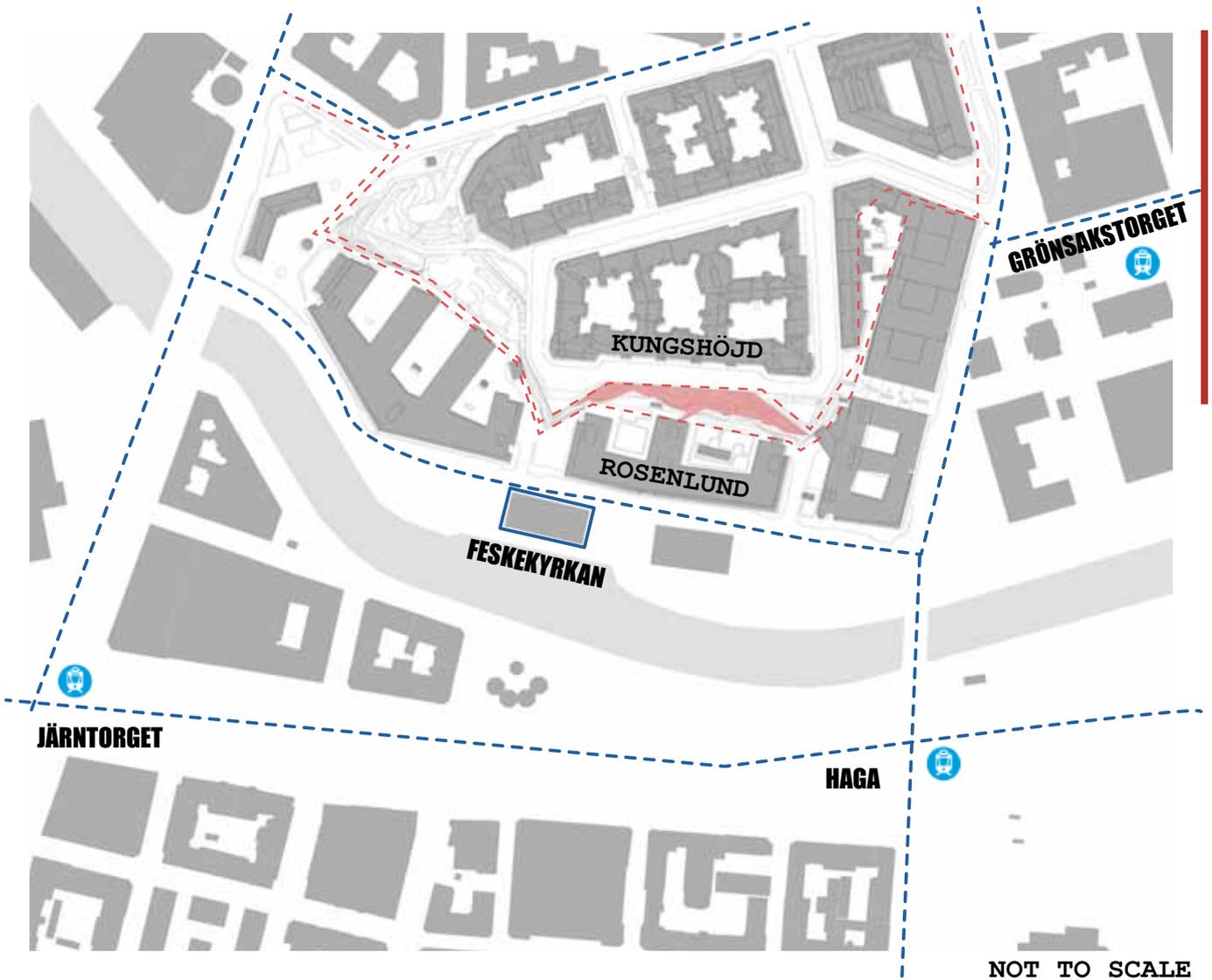
NOT TO SCALE

THE SITE OFFERS VIEWS OVER THE CITY.

Some key nodes are picked out to be enhanced by the design proposal. The view is seen as an important quality and a challenge to make a design that enhance and play with the views. It is also seen as a recreational quality that can help the focus group to take distance to their challenges in the city below.

-  Visible Area from Site
-  Key Viewpoints





SITUATED ON THE BORDER

between Rosenlund and Kungshöjd the proposal is placing itself in a physical as well as a social border. Opportunity is seen in blurring this border through design. The site is close to Feskekyrkan (Gothenburg main fish market), which is a well-known node in Gothenburg. In the development plans for Rosenlund densification and addition of a public elevator is proposed. This is taken into account in the further design.

-  Tram Stop
-  Main Flows
-  Area Border
-  The Site

PROPOSAL





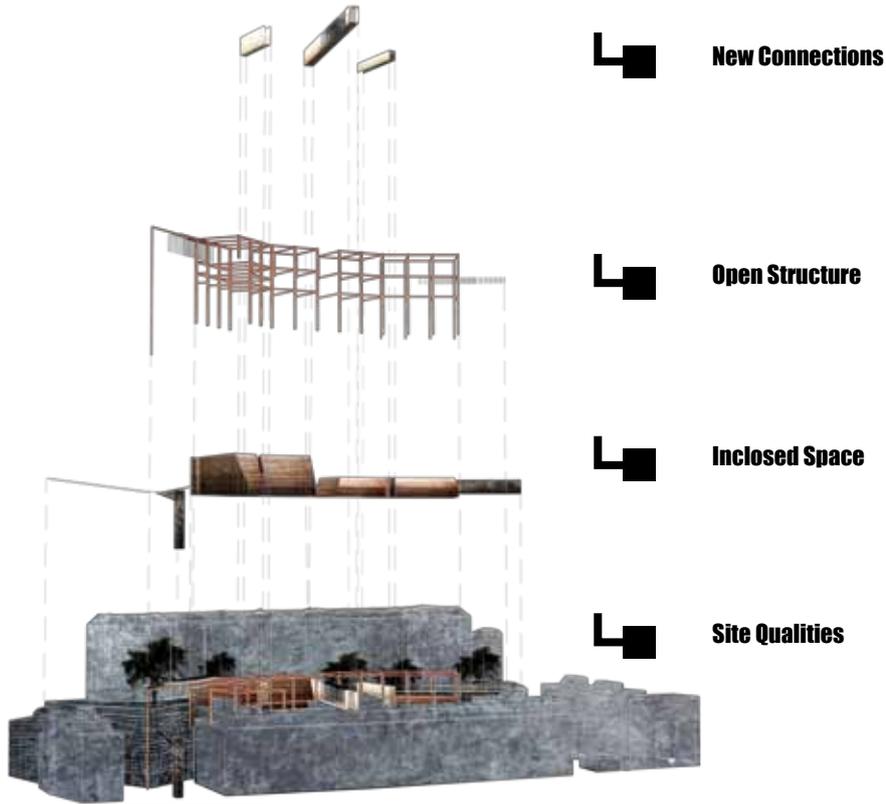
THE ROOF WALK

“I think that the centre against homelessness can play a role (in the inclusion of the homeless). But it serves both ways. To get a platform in the city where they belong also become an exclusion. It is an inclusive exclusion so to speak. They still get stigmatized if we say that they need a specific environment. Actually the task is to create a platform for all. This is a huge task, but it is important that all citizens feel a sense of belonging.”

ANNIKA STRÖM ÖBERG
Head of Operations
Homelessness
Räddningsmissionen Göteborg

A WALKWAY IS ADDED TO CONNECT

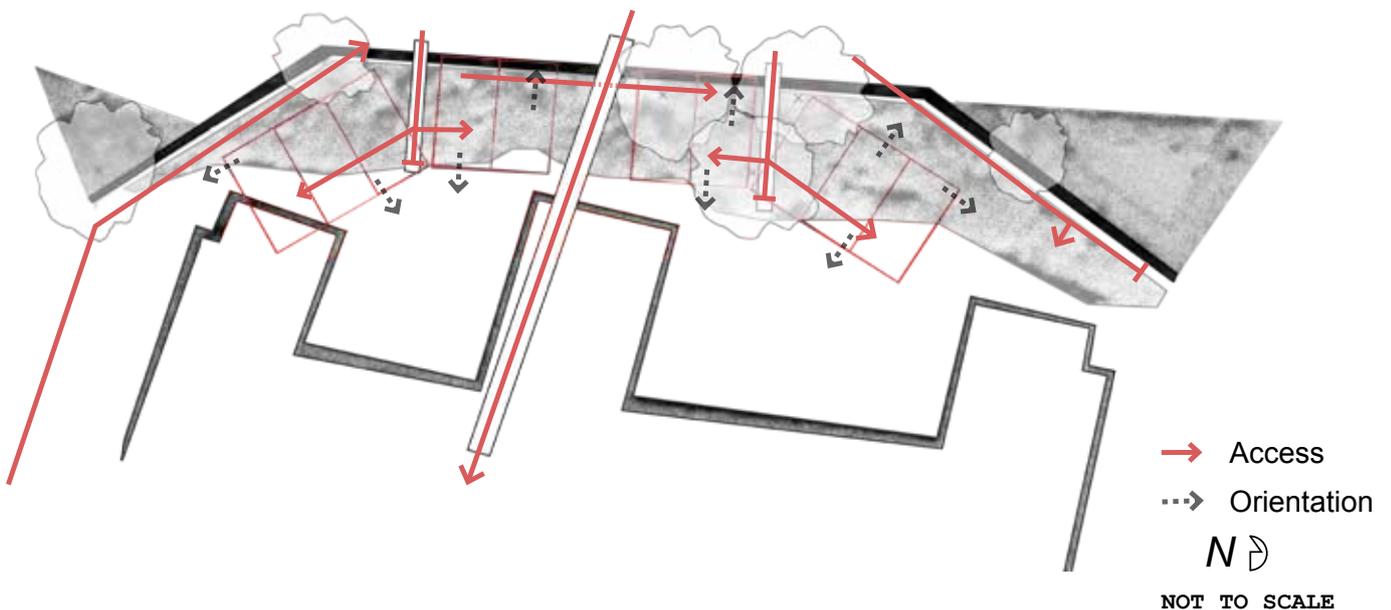
the street to the roof of the neighbouring office building. It opens up for new public space in the city. The centre can expand onto the roof with a garden and a restaurant etc. The walkway frame Skansen Kronan which is one of the major nodes you see from the site on the city skyline. This new public place is overlooking the city. Here a new culture on the terms of the people in homelessness can form.

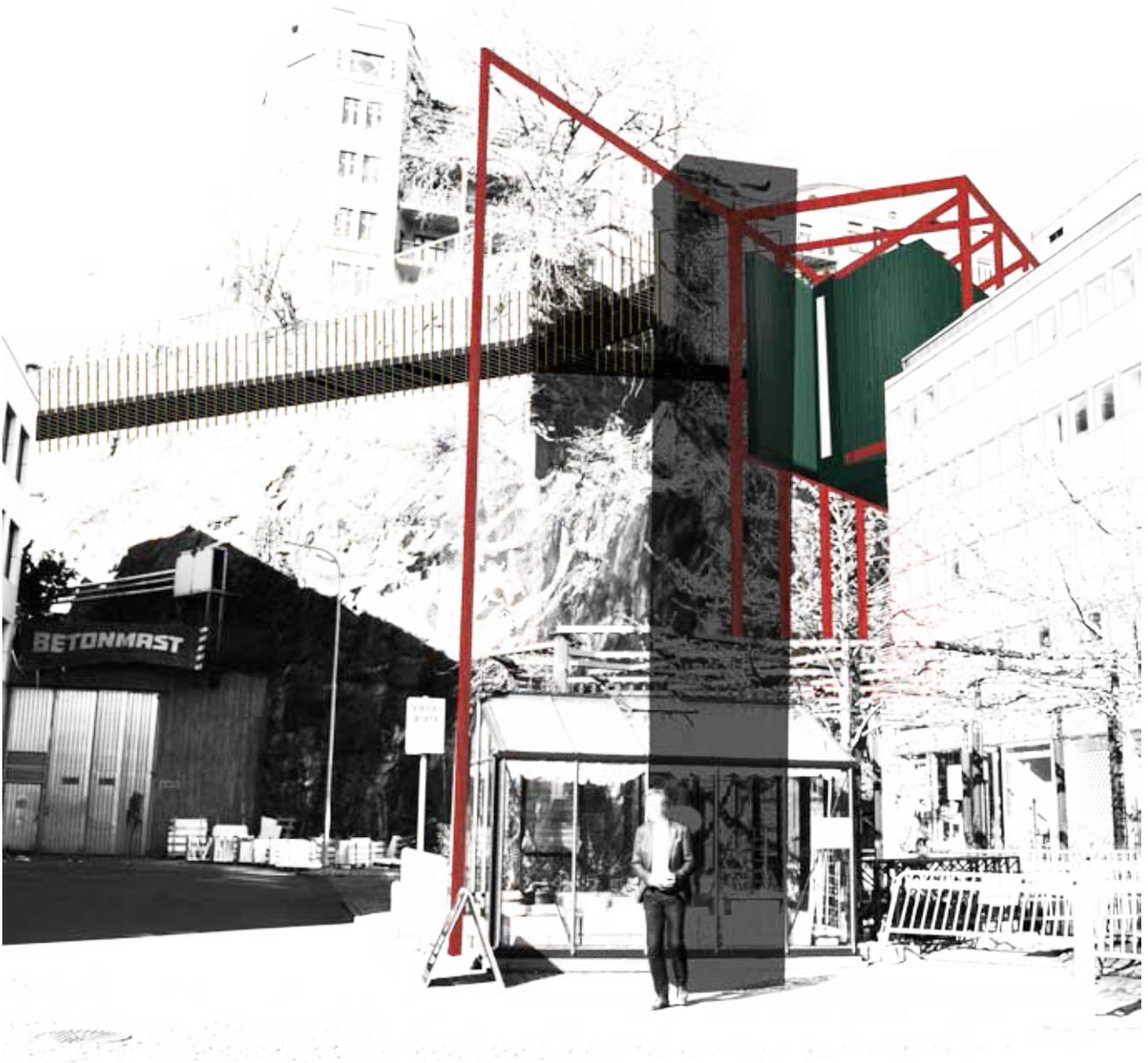


THE CONCEPT is an urban typology that inspires encounters and allows intimacy as a tool from social inclusion of people living in homelessness. Four new connections are added to create a new flow in the area and to have multiple entrances into the building. Each of them frame specific parts of the cityscape.

A timber structure is added to touch the site punctually and to ensure flexibility for future transformation. The building volume is relating sensitively to the rock wall and retained trees on site. Two open public places are added on top of the volume within the structure.

The “home” is orientated southeast for the morning sun and the “culture” and the public spaces southwest for the evening sun.

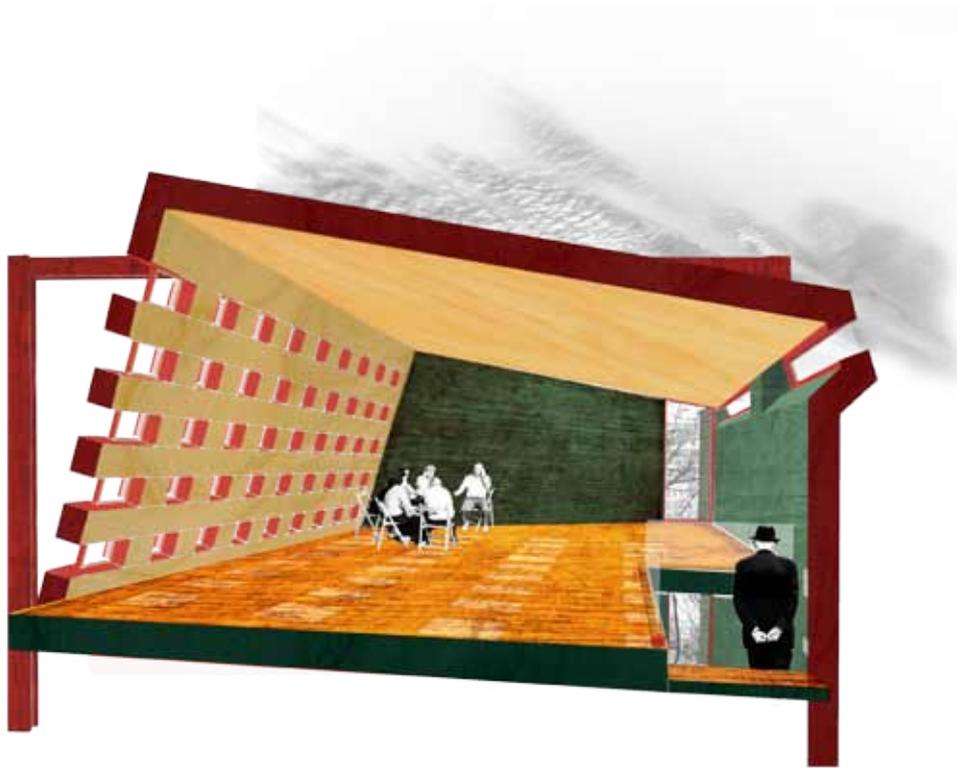




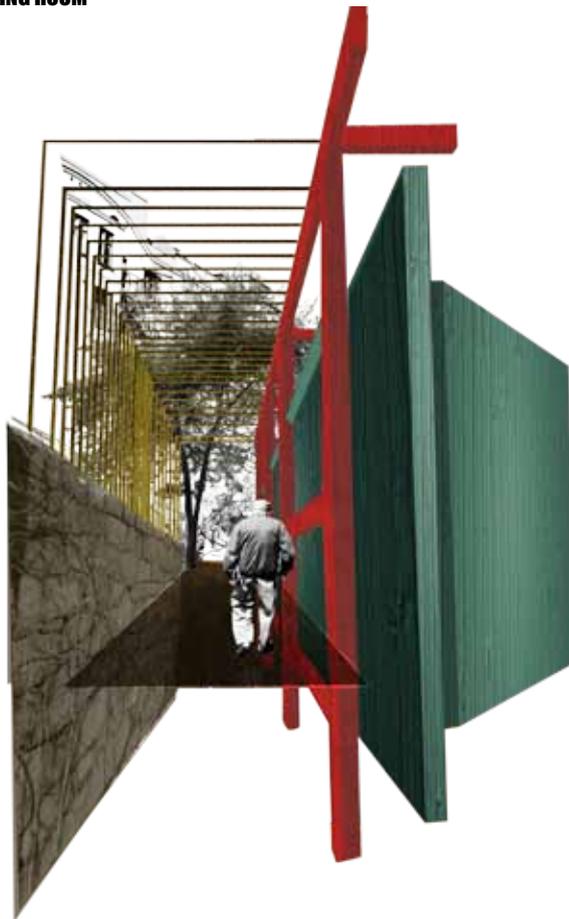
THE LOWER SQUARE

THE LOWER SQUARE IS THE MAIN CONNECTION TO CITY BELOW.

The structure of the building extends out onto the square to mark its existence. The building volume peaks out between the old fortress wall and the office building. An elevator is placed along the sidewalk and brings you up to a path connecting to the playground (west) and brings you up between the old fortress wall and the building (east). The design of the square and the elevator is left open for further development.



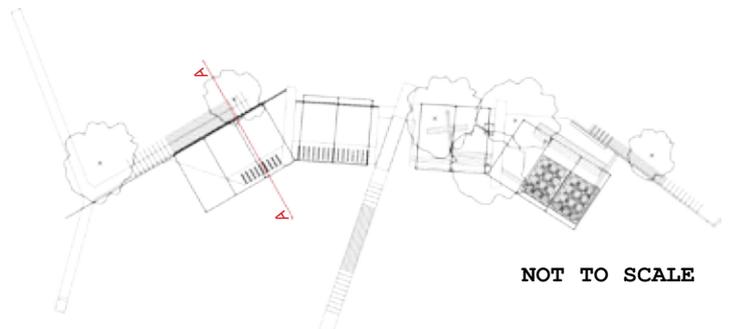
THE LIVING ROOM



THE NEW WAY UP



THE "HOME" consists of a gradient of spaces and atmospheres. Multiple small rooms on 3.5 stories allow a wide range of groups to use the "Home" simultaneously. As you move down into the building the atmosphere will change from the more shared and common to the more intimate and individual.



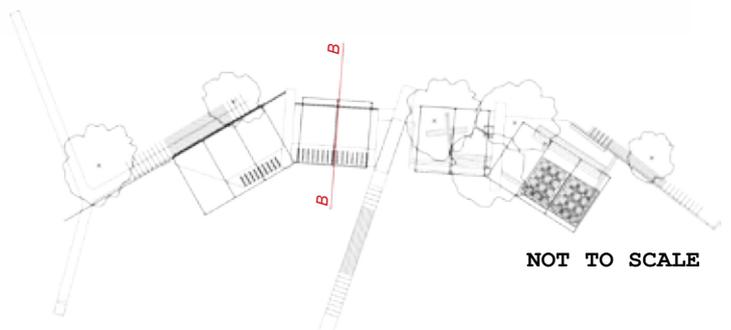
NOT TO SCALE



ENTERING THE "HOME"



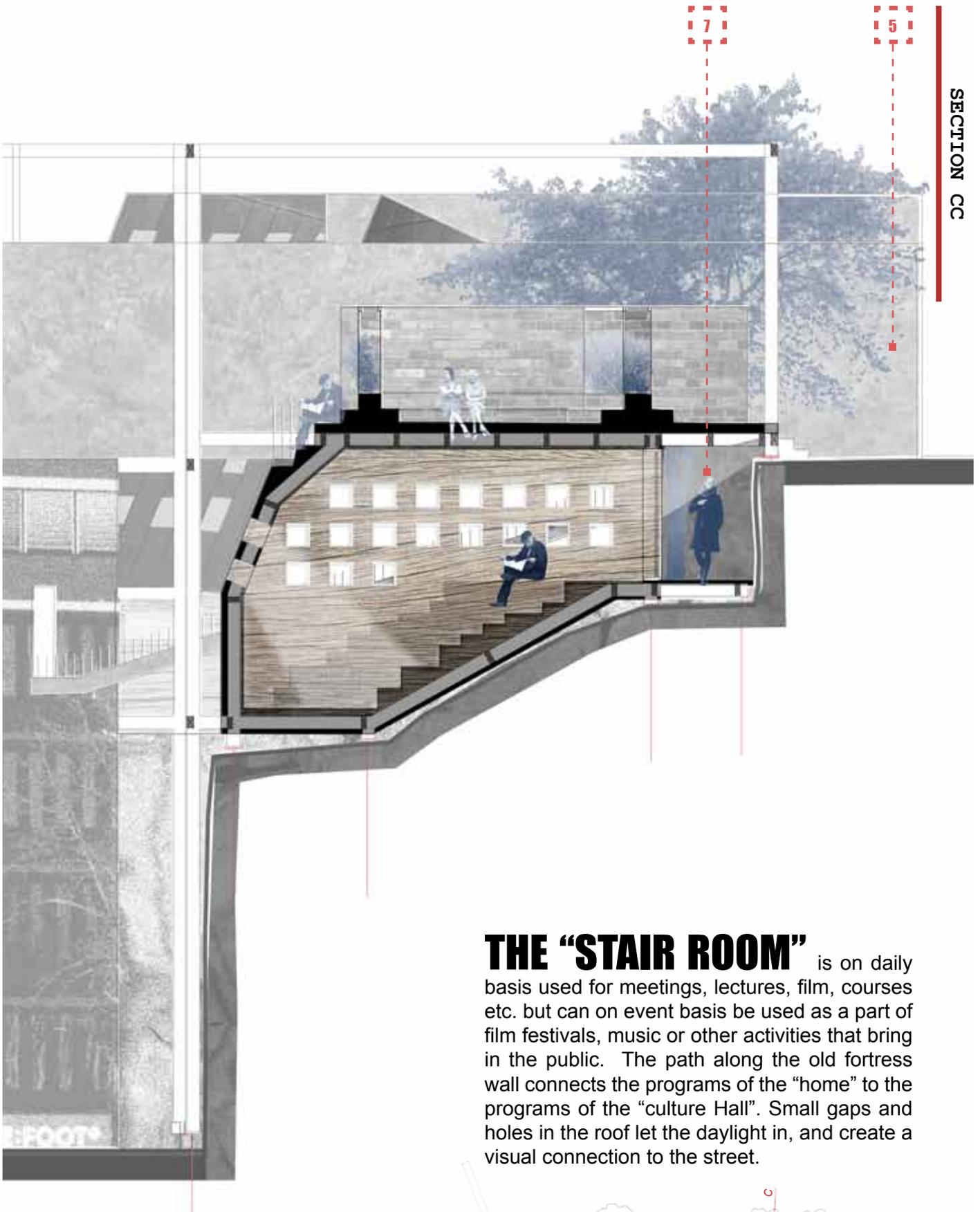
THE “HOME” provides flexible space that can have uses directed towards the homeless, the public or both. This will help to blur the boundaries between groups in Gothenburg. In this Section you see the close proximity of public and flexible space (street level) and the space and functions directed towards the homeless (consultation rooms and showers).



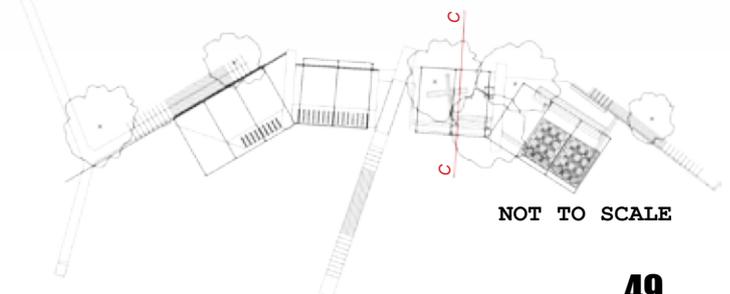


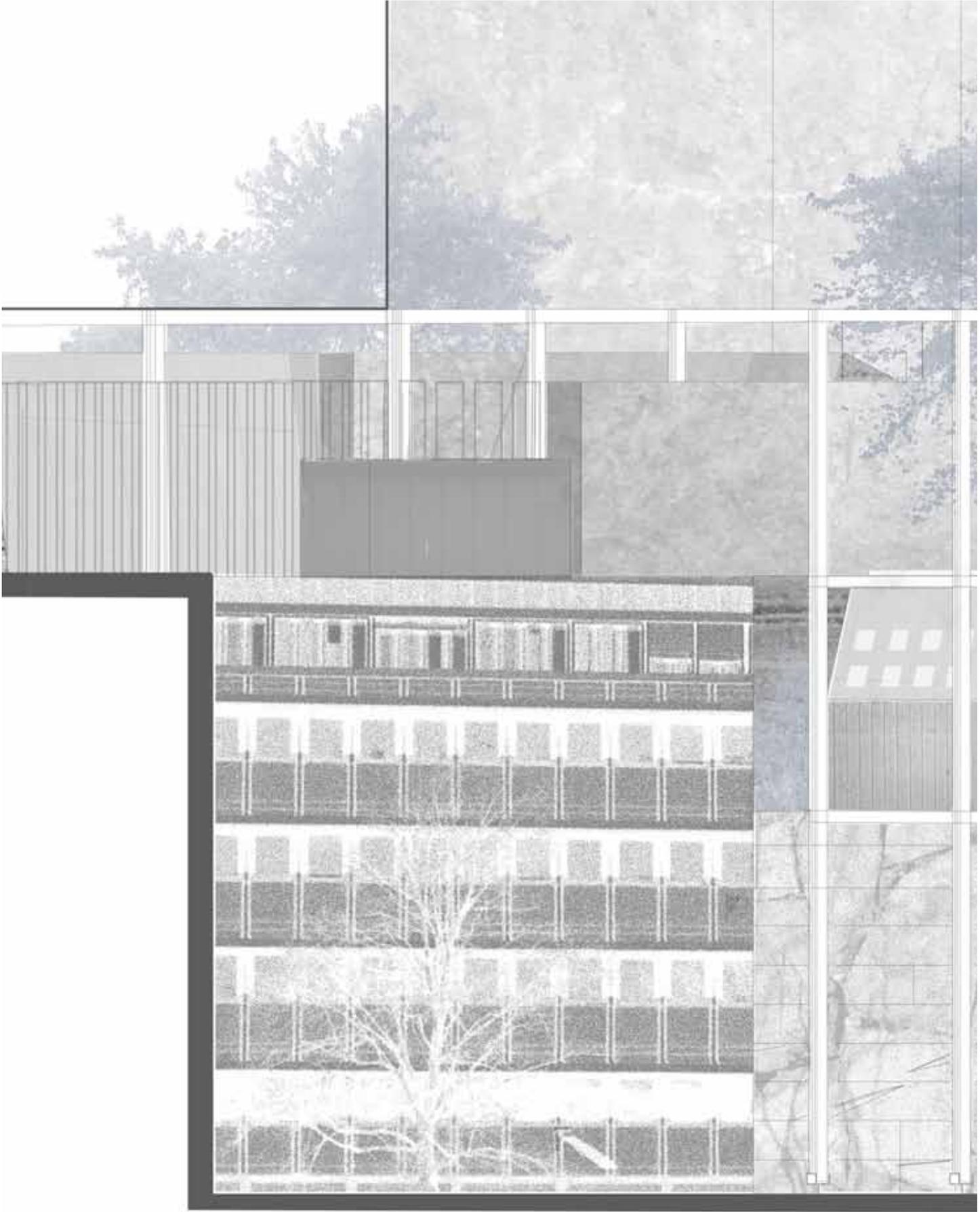
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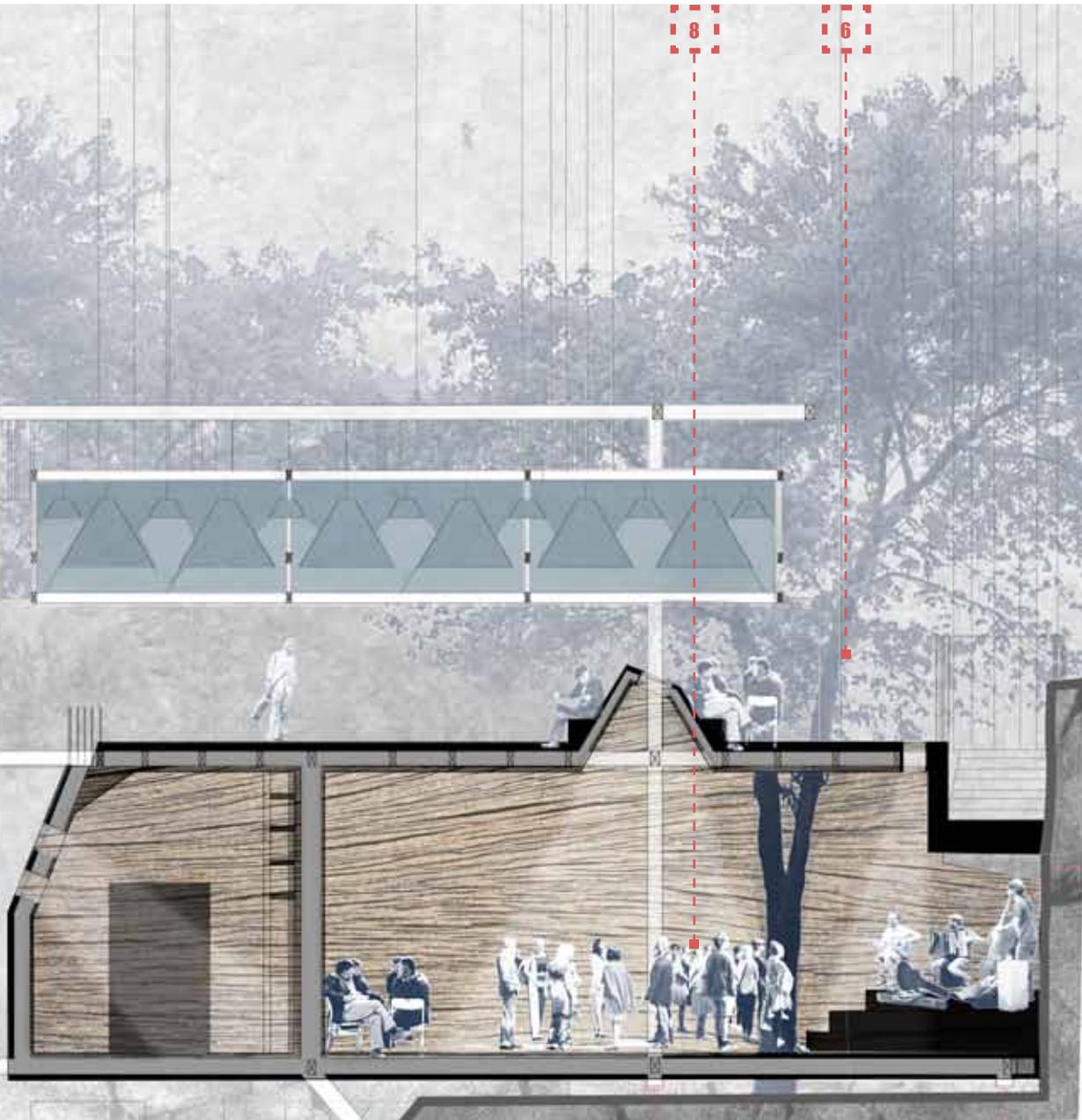
THE CONNECTION



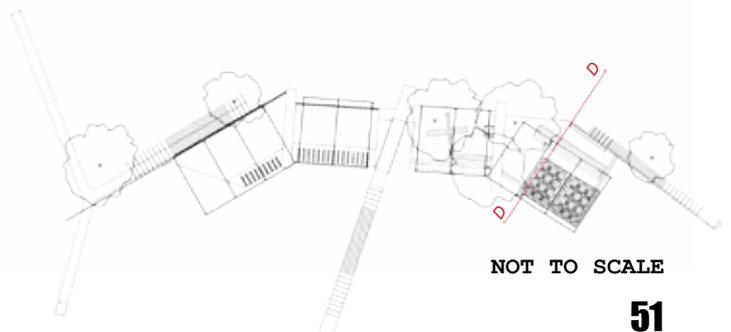
THE “STAIR ROOM” is on daily basis used for meetings, lectures, film, courses etc. but can on event basis be used as a part of film festivals, music or other activities that bring in the public. The path along the old fortress wall connects the programs of the “home” to the programs of the “culture Hall”. Small gaps and holes in the roof let the daylight in, and create a visual connection to the street.







THE “CULTURE HALL” is for activities that bring different groups together. In addition to being used for workshops for the homeless/ target group, it can host public events such as concerts, arts and theatre.



NOT TO SCALE

ROOF PLAN

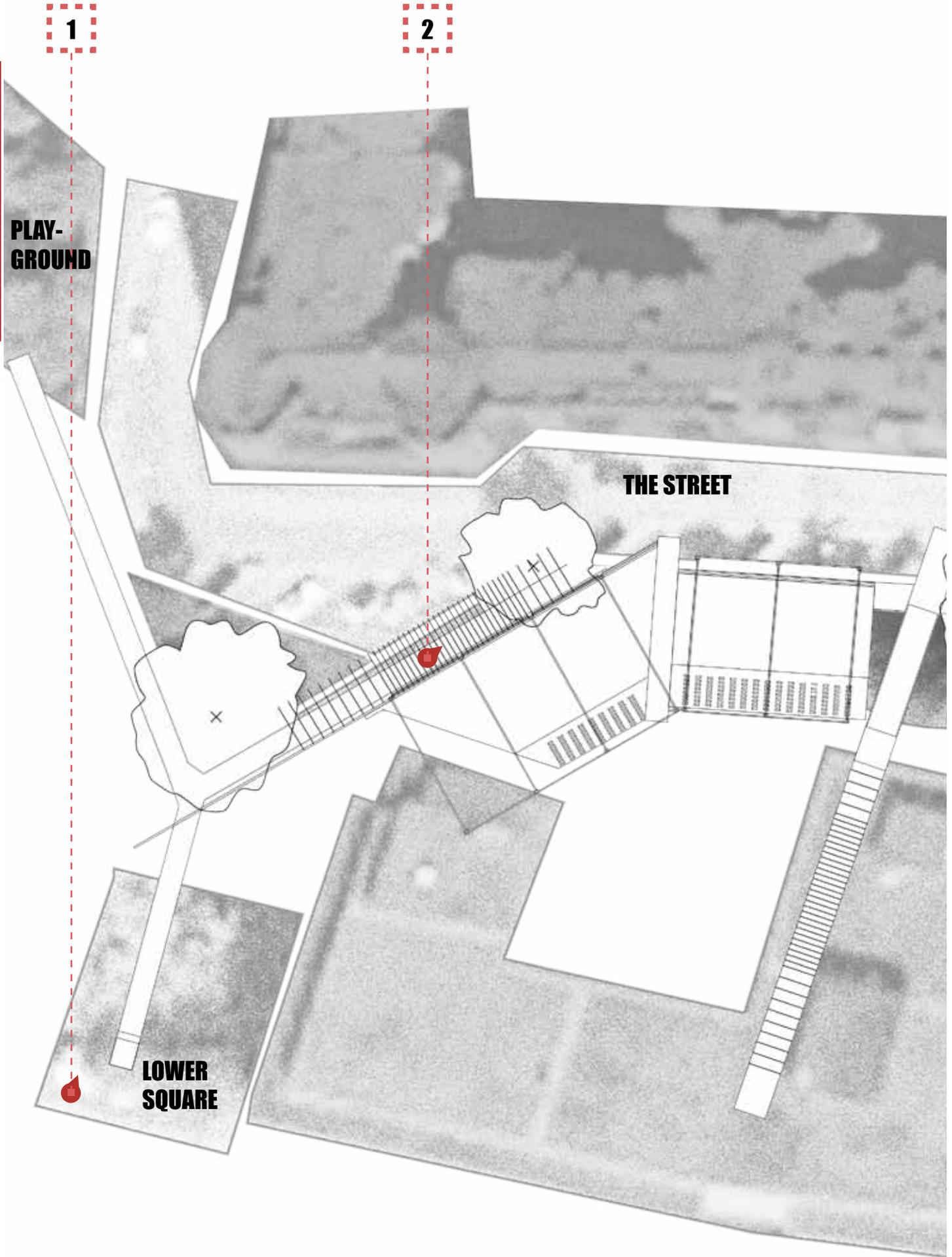
1

2

PLAY-
GROUND

THE STREET

LOWER
SQUARE



**THE CASTLE /
RESIDENTIAL BUILDING**

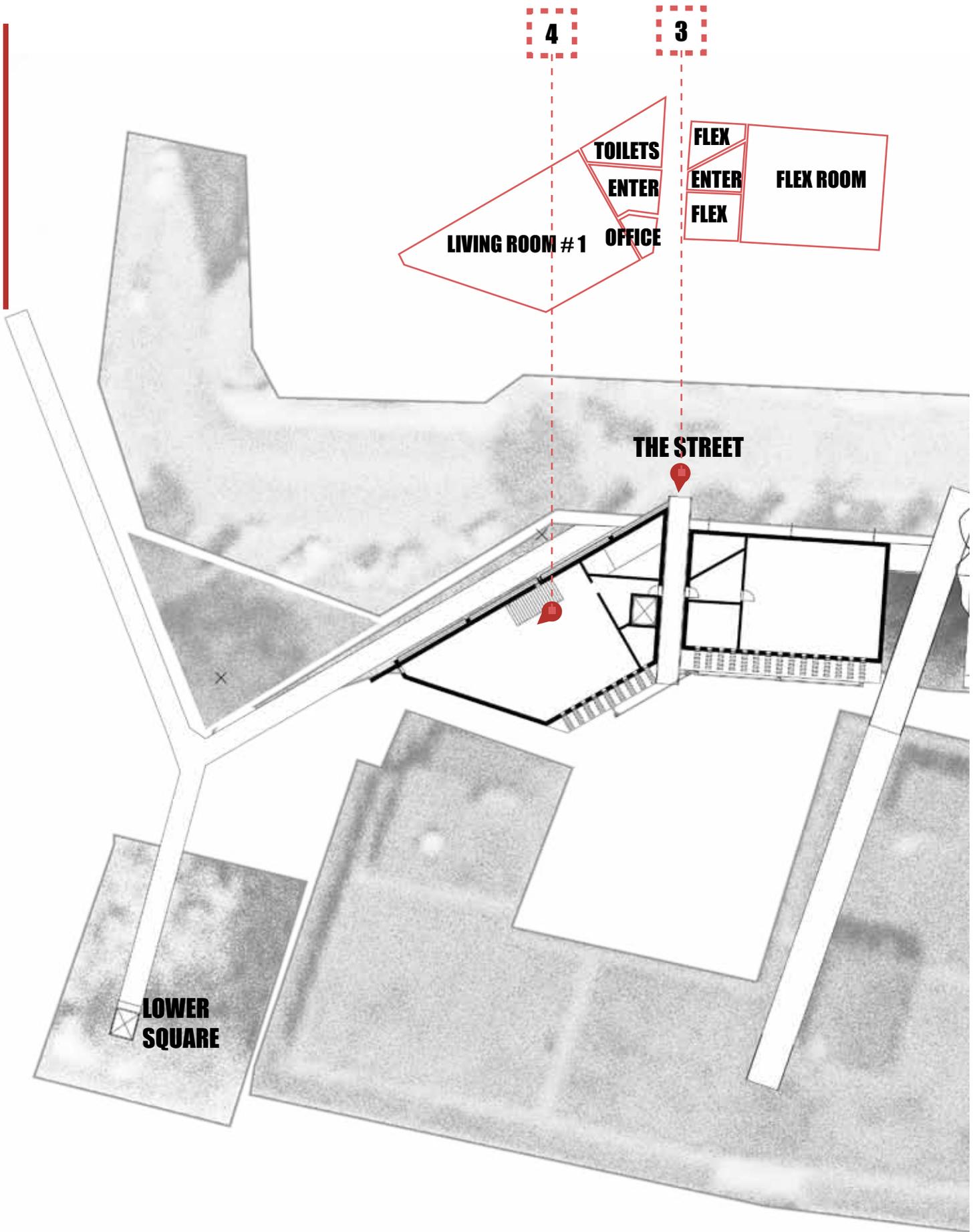
VIEW PARK

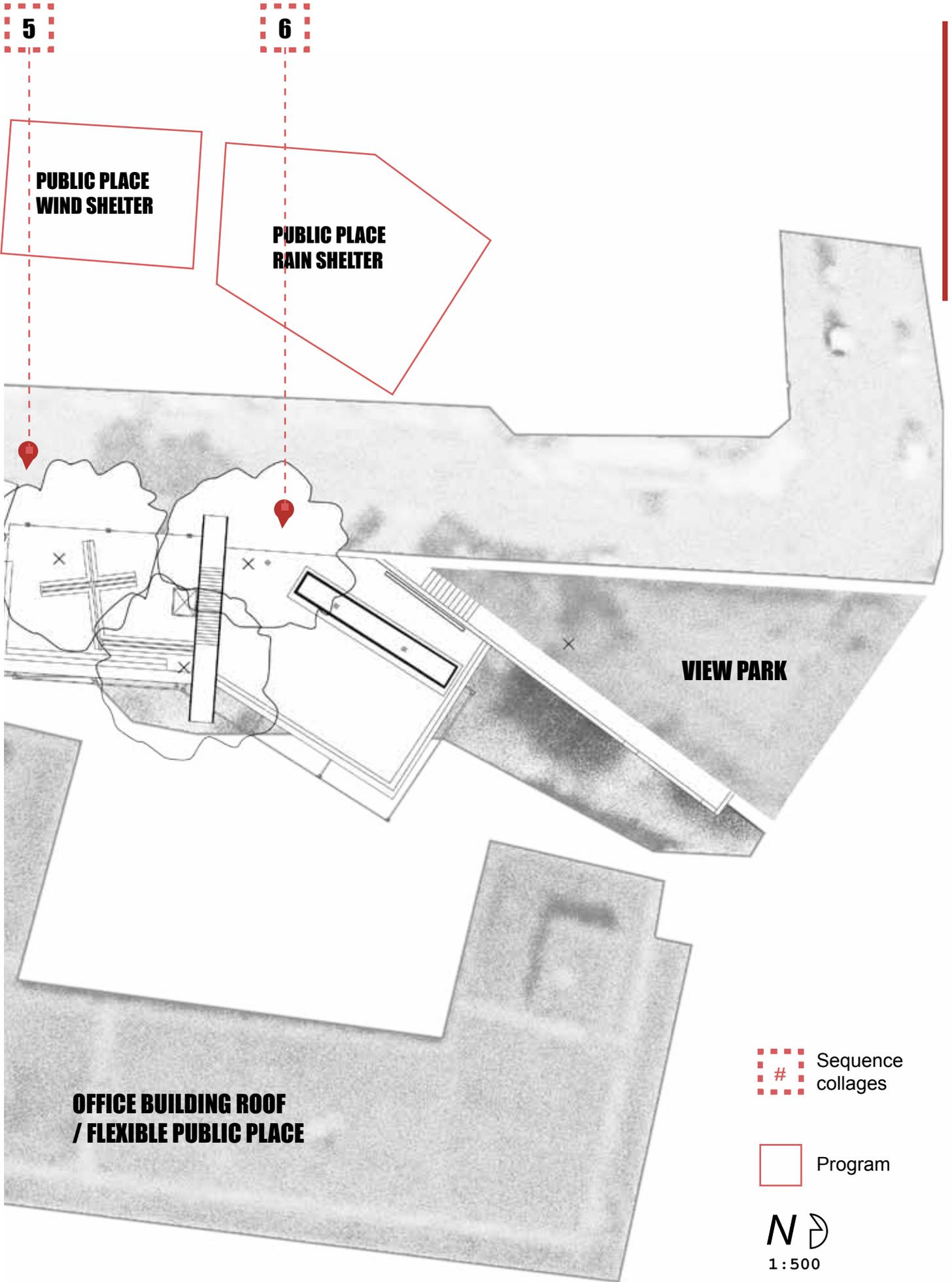
**OFFICE BUILDING ROOF / FLEXIBLE
PUBLIC PLACE**

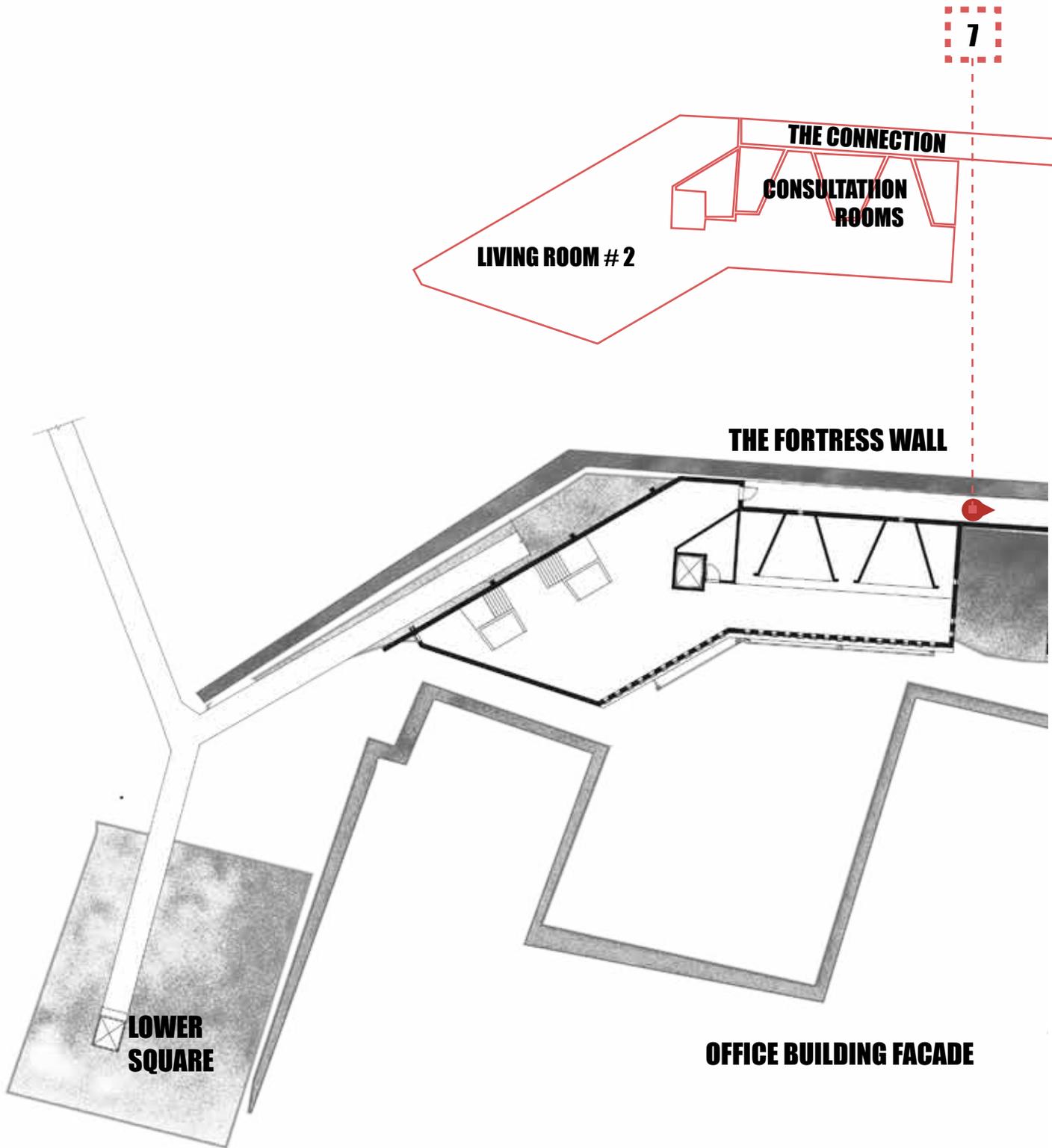
 Sequence collages

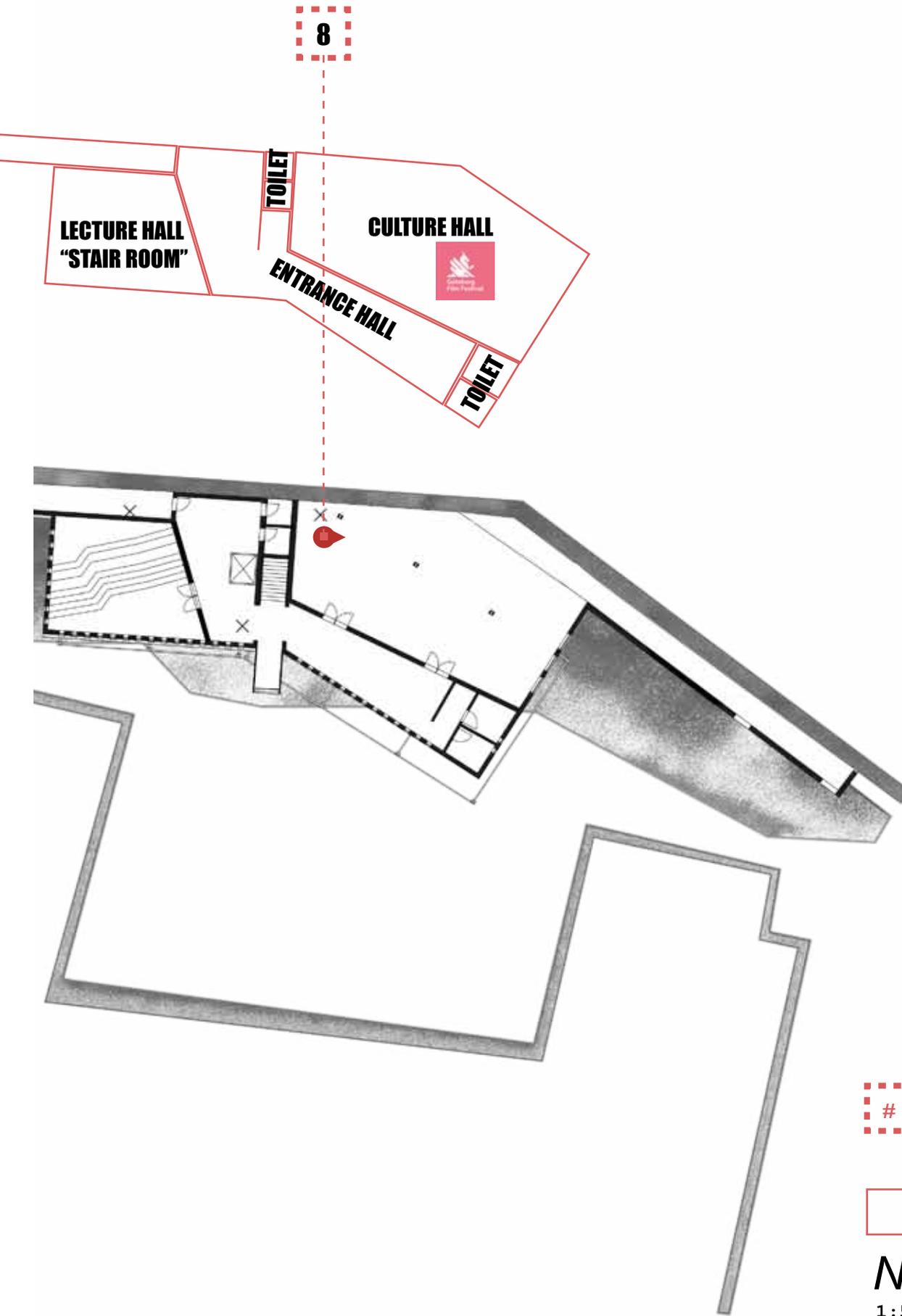
N 
1:500

PLAN 0 (+21 METERS)





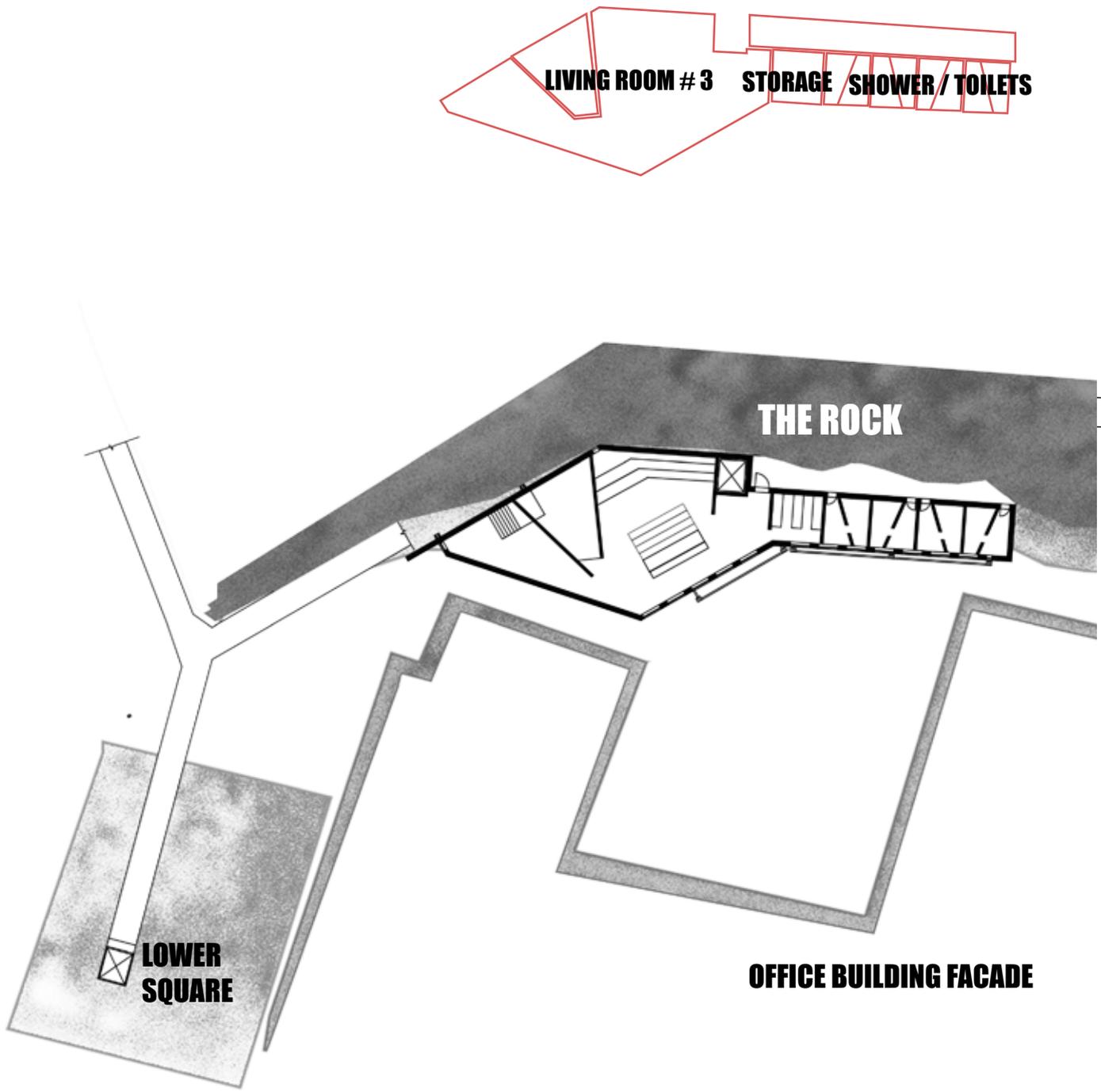




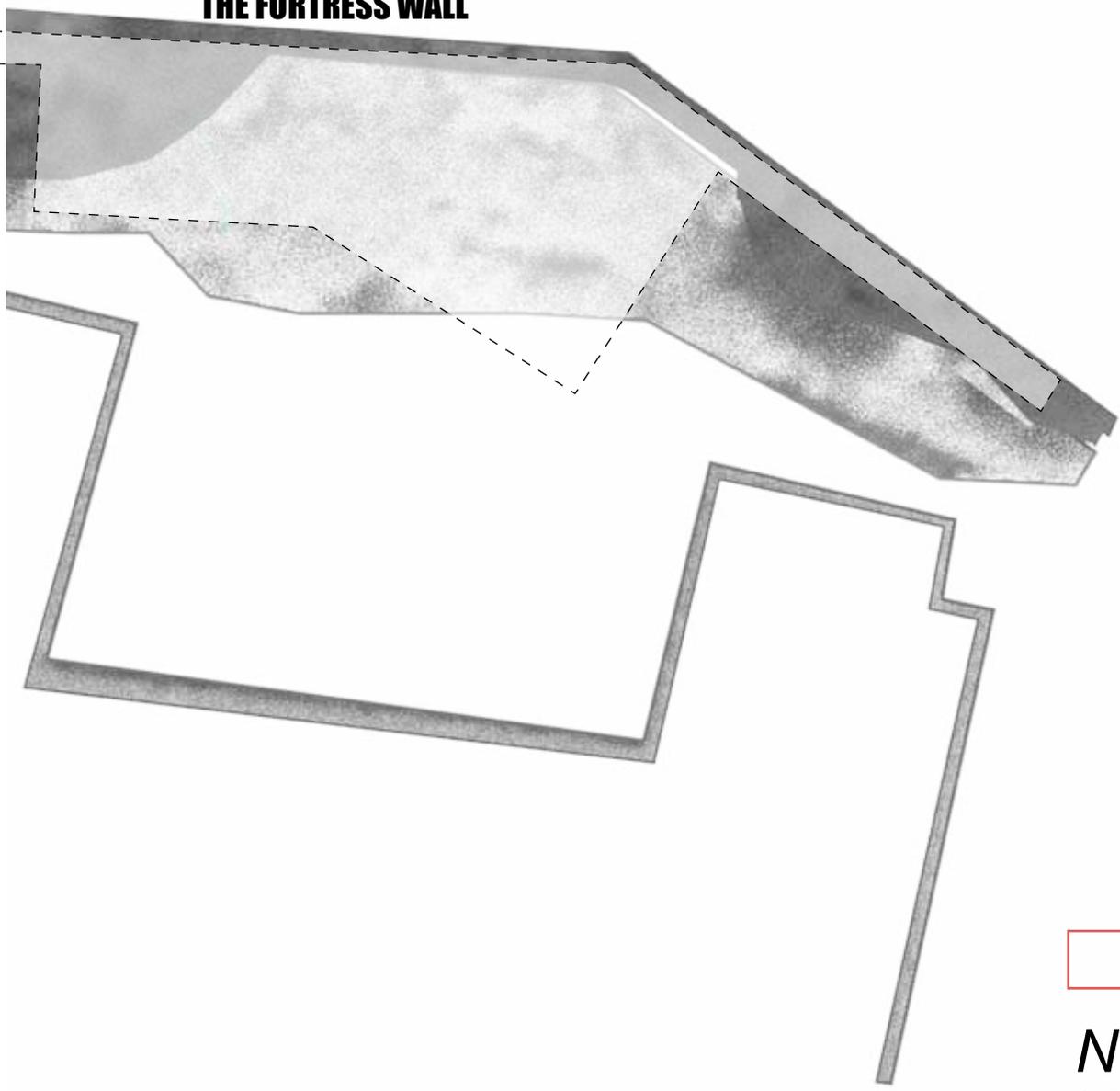
 Sequence collages

 Program


1 : 500



THE FORTRESS WALL



 Program

N 
1 : 500



This master thesis has been a challenging and inspiring journey. I have learned a lot and I am truly grateful for the openness and inspiring visions I have met throughout this journey. In this part of the booklet I will conclude and reflect on the research questions, the process, the result and purpose of the master thesis.

THE PURPOSE

This master thesis set out to explore how I as an architect can play a role in the social inclusion of people in homelessness. This was explored through the research questions; how can an architectural typology support the path out of homelessness? And what factors are relevant in the design against homelessness? The research consists of interviews, theory studies, experience-based research and continuous iterations of analysis, design, feedback and refinement. The result is a centre against homelessness, a platform for social inclusion of people living in homelessness.

THE PROCESS

The course of the journey has changed many times. Questions of the “right” ethical positions, location, program and the social-spatial qualities and challenges have been discussed and revisited continuously. The result reflects this constant questioning.

In the process there were two major turning points. One was in the change of site from an old slaughterhouse in an old industrial area to the chosen site. This was done for multiple reasons. Firstly, to integrate the centre better in the city, secondly, to challenge the trend that challenged groups are placed in challenged areas and thirdly, to open up for discussion on why a centre for the homeless could not be located in the city centre. I believe it can.

The second major turning point was a change of focus. A gap was found in the discourse. Much discussion is focused on solving homelessness through housing (Tsemberis S., 2010). Though housing is an important factor for solving homelessness, it has become clear that the issue must be addressed on from multiple angles. Therefore this master thesis puts focus on the before and after housing. It aims to address the needs of support and social inclusion of people in risk of eviction, people in homelessness and people on the way out of homelessness. By combining the privacy and safety of the home and the openness and flexibility of the public place this project seeks to be a base for belonging and a pivot for social contact.

WHAT ROLE CAN ARCHITECTS PLAY IN THE SOCIAL INCLUSION OF PEOPLE LIVING IN HOMELESSNESS?

The role we as architects and urban planners can play in the social inclusion of people living in homelessness exists on many levels. We can play a role in the direct design of solutions to real needs such as sheltering, housing, sanitation, space for supporting activities, space for interaction between groups and inclusive urban environments. We can also play a role in the mediation between stakeholders and lift the important factors for a sustainable process as well as result. Additionally we can play a role in the idea generation and creation of manifestations that lifts the discussion on this societal challenge.

THE RESULT

This thesis strives to provide answers on all these levels. The result is a solution orientated design proposal that merge supportive and cultural typologies to create a positive effect on homelessness as well as related challenges such as segregation, prejudice and stigma. It is a collaborative process including relevant stakeholders as well as representatives of the focus group. It is a manifestation that opens for further discussion on location, accessibility, exposure, support, approach, opportunities and possibilities of how to build against homelessness in Gothenburg.

HOW TO DESIGN FOR AND WITH A VULNERABLE GROUP?

Through the process of this thesis the voice of the supporting organisations and representatives (people who found their way out of homelessness) have been the loudest. It has been a goal to establish a participatory process directly with people in homelessness but this proved to be very difficult. Establishing contact to the group was challenging and the ones approached did not wish to participate. I believe this was due to the project being a student project of which they could not see a direct impact on their daily lives. Nevertheless I believe that this project can strengthen the base of discussion and participation between the users, the municipality and other stakeholders in the future.

HOW CAN AN ARCHITECTURAL TYPOLOGY SUPPORT THE PATH OUT OF HOMELESSNESS?

For the centre against homelessness as a typology to support the path out of homelessness on a societal level as well as for the individual it must be an investment in the challenges that lay behind homelessness such as loneliness, exclusion and stigma. It must be a permanent and flexible investment for a permanent and ever changing challenge. It must be an integrated part of the society as well as the city so it does not become what Annika Ström Öberg called "an inclusive exclusion"(p. 41). It must strengthen the relationship between the city, its citizens and the marginalized groups. By being a platform to blur inequalities and setting the tone for a more inclusive urban culture the centre against homelessness can be a crucial step on the path out of homelessness.

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IMAGES

Unmarked images are by the author.

Gillberg, D (2015) Image#1: Bench in Rosenlund, Gothenburg. From: <http://blogg.djungeltrumman.se/thismustbeth-eplace/category/esperantoplatsen/>

Räddningsmissionen (2015) Image#2: Homelessness. From: <http://www.raddningsmissionen.se/blogg/hemloshet>

Mueller, C (2014) Image#3: Walking men in the city. From: <http://www.districtdetroit.com/news/walkable-city>

Gothenburg Municipality (2015) Image#4: Social Resources. From: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-7jEstrND_CE

Räddningsmissionen (2016) Image#5 Räddningsmissionen. From: <http://www.raddningsmissionen.se/om-oss>

Räddningsmission (2015) Image#6: Support. From: <http://www.raddningsmissionen.se/nyheter/ny-rapport-kartlagger-akutboenden>

Joeff Davis (2015) Image#7: The Politics of Park Benches. From: <http://clatl.com/atlanta/the-politics-of-park-benches/Content?oid=13202264>

Stanley Q. Woodvine (2015) Image#8: Defensive Design. From: <http://www.straight.com/blogra/419666/homeless-vancouver-fairviews-inoffensive-defensive-architecture>

Michael Rakowitz (2014) Image#9: ParaSITE. From: <http://in-habitat.com/parasite-inflatable-shelter-uses-excess-hvac-air-to-keep-the-homeless-warm/>

RianCityHousing (2013) Image#10: Bench Beds. From: <http://weburbanist.com/2014/07/24/bench-to-bedroom-public-furniture-turned-homeless-shelters/>

James Furzer (2015) Image#11: Homes for the Homeless. From: <http://www.upworthy.com/homeless-people-arent-safe-sleeping-on-streets-thats-why-these-parasitic-pods-are-so-fantastic>

ISRAEL BAYER (2011) Image#12:Right 2 Dream Too Homeless Camp. From: <http://news.streetroots.org/2011/10/18/occupy-portland-visits-right-dream-too>

Skid Row Housing Trust (2015) Image#13: Star Apartments. From: <http://mashable.com/2015/01/11/design-for-the-homeless/#viSYi1erOOqR>

APPENDIX

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Image#7: The Politics of Park Benches (Joeff Davis, 2015)

DEFENSIVE DESIGN



Image#8: Defensive Design (Stanley Q. Woodvine, 2015)

DEFENSIVE DESIGN



Image#9: ParaSITE (Michael Rakowitz, 2014)

HARM REDUCTION



Image#10: Bench Beds (RianCityHousing, 2013)

HARM REDUCTION



Image#11: A-KAMP47 (Stephane Malka, 2013)

HARM REDUCTION



Image#12: Homes for the Homeless (James Furzer, 2015)

HARM REDUCTION



Image#13: Homeless Camp (Israel Bayer, 2011)

LEGALIZING



Image#14: Star Apartments (Skid Row Housing Trust, 2015)

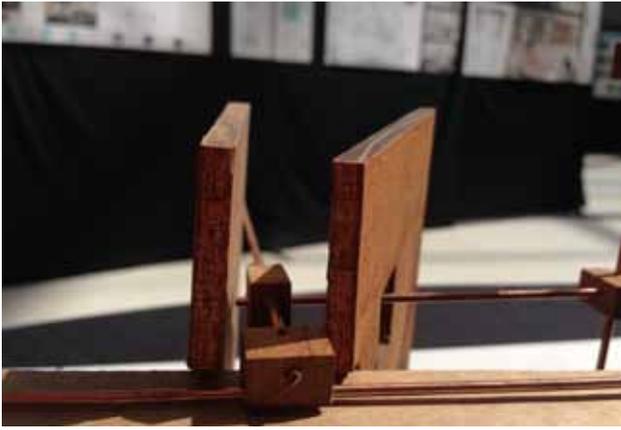
SECONDARY HOUSING MARKET



Image#7: The Politics of Park Benches (Joeff Davis, 2015)

DESIGNING AGAINST HOMELESSNESS IS AN ETHICAL QUESTION.

What actions should be taken? And how? Do we design defensively to keep people from sleeping on the street? Do we design with acceptance and mitigation in mind, making sleeping on streets less harmful? Do we design large housing buildings gathering the group under the same roof? Do we legalize urban rough sleeping in designated zones? Any form of action reflects a set of values and a view of humanity, which makes this an ethical question as much as a political and societal one. The view on homelessness and the person in homelessness resonate clearly in the typology formed to solve issue in question.



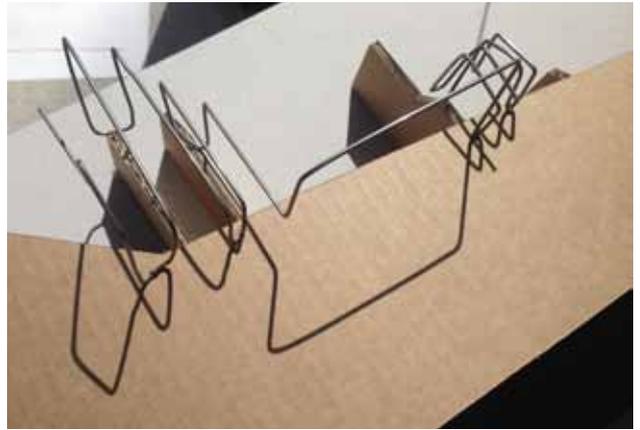
Framing



Flows



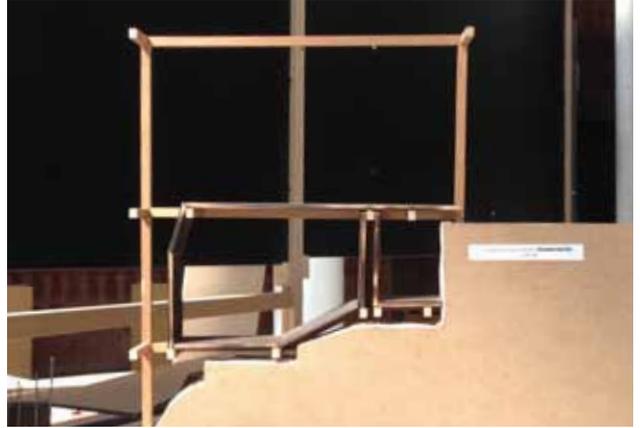
Proposal #1



Rhythm



Proposal #2



Structural Section



New Urban Connections



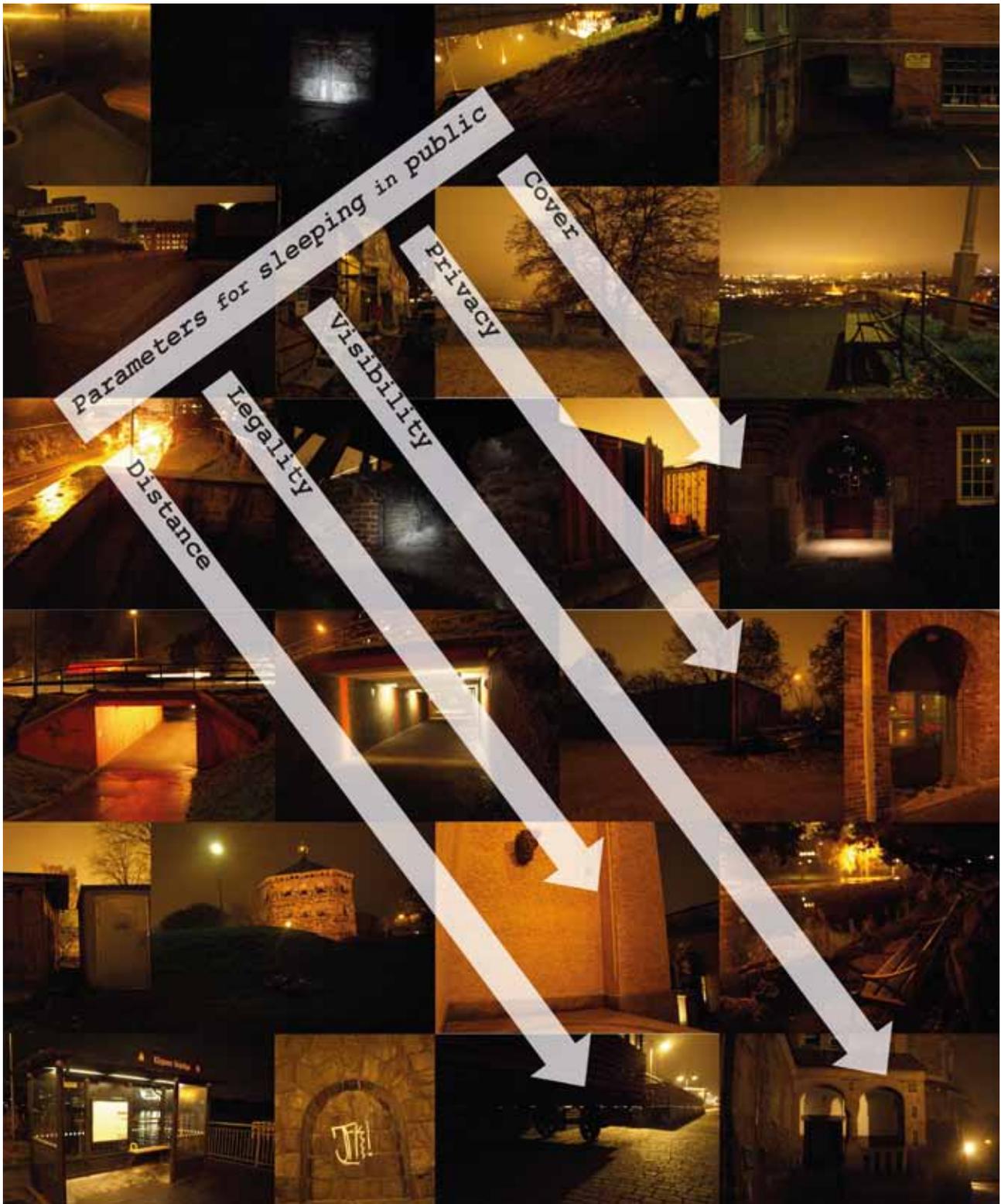
Structural Section



Structural Experimentation

MODELLING WAS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PROCESS.

Building a scale model of the site helped to understand the complexity of it. Working with abstract modelling in various materials helped to find compositions, structural principles and how to enhance the qualities of the site.



THE BODY EXPERIENCE OF ROUGH SLEEPING IN GOTHENBURG

culminated in reflections on challenges on the street and a collection public spaces that was either used for sleeping or considered as having potential for

sleeping. This is a matrix that is ordered from top left to bottom left on the factors that was found important in the choice of space.

The result is the parameters and an image of the hostile the urban environment. The main goal was to get an insight in the physical and mental challenges rough sleepers face in Gothenburg.



NIGHT #1

PACKING LIST

- 1 x Sleeping bag
- 1 x Plastic sheet
- 1 x Sleeping mat
- 1 x toothbrush
- 1 x camera
- Warm clothes
- Pen and paper

RULES

Sleep in public for three nights in a row. Find urban places in Gothenburg where you will feel that you can sleep. Try to get a bed in a homeless shelter for 1 night. Note how this affects you physically and mentally every 1-2 hour. Try to get some sleep. Food and sanitation, try to figure it out as you go along. If it gets too cold, go home rest, shower and go back out and try again.



NIGHT #2

Night #1

As long as I move around I blend in and I feel safe. I was looking for places in the city centre. At Nordstan I could hide in the parking house but I did not feel safe. At Kunst Museet there is a relatively good place hidden in the façade, but I did not feel safe there either. I Slept on top of a container on the harbour. Felt hidden and safe. I dreamt that people were standing around me talking about what to do with me.

Night #2

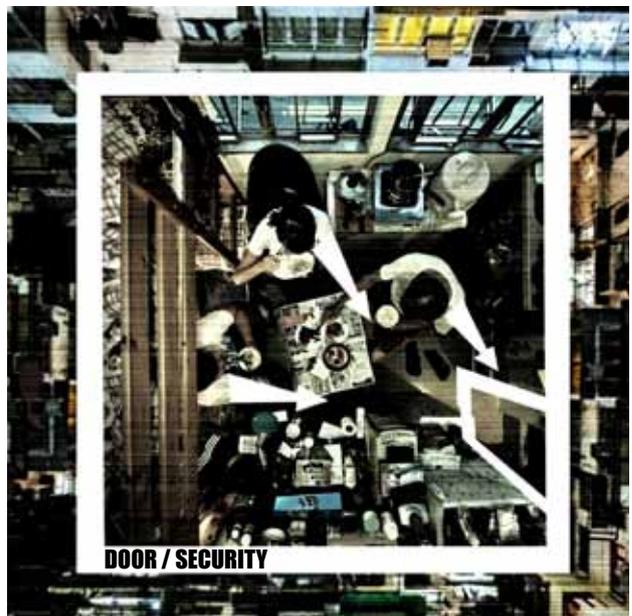
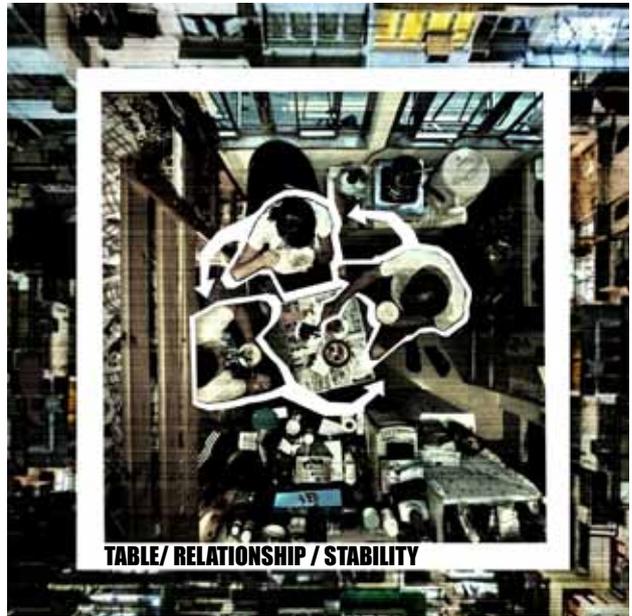
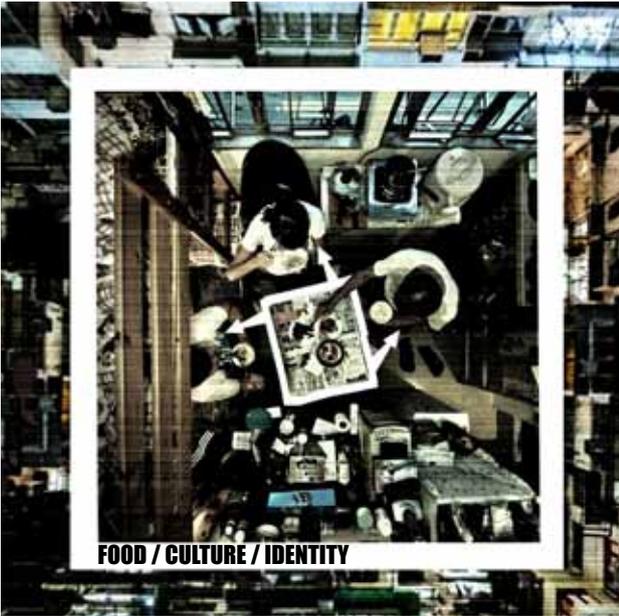
I feel hung over, tired and lonely. I have a headache. I went to Slotsskogen, the Brigde over the Götatunnel and the central station, but I did not find a good place to sleep. I slept at Skansen Kronan. It was very cold, I felt unsafe, very alone and vulnerable. I got only a few hours of sleep. I walked around the rest of the night and passed the time.

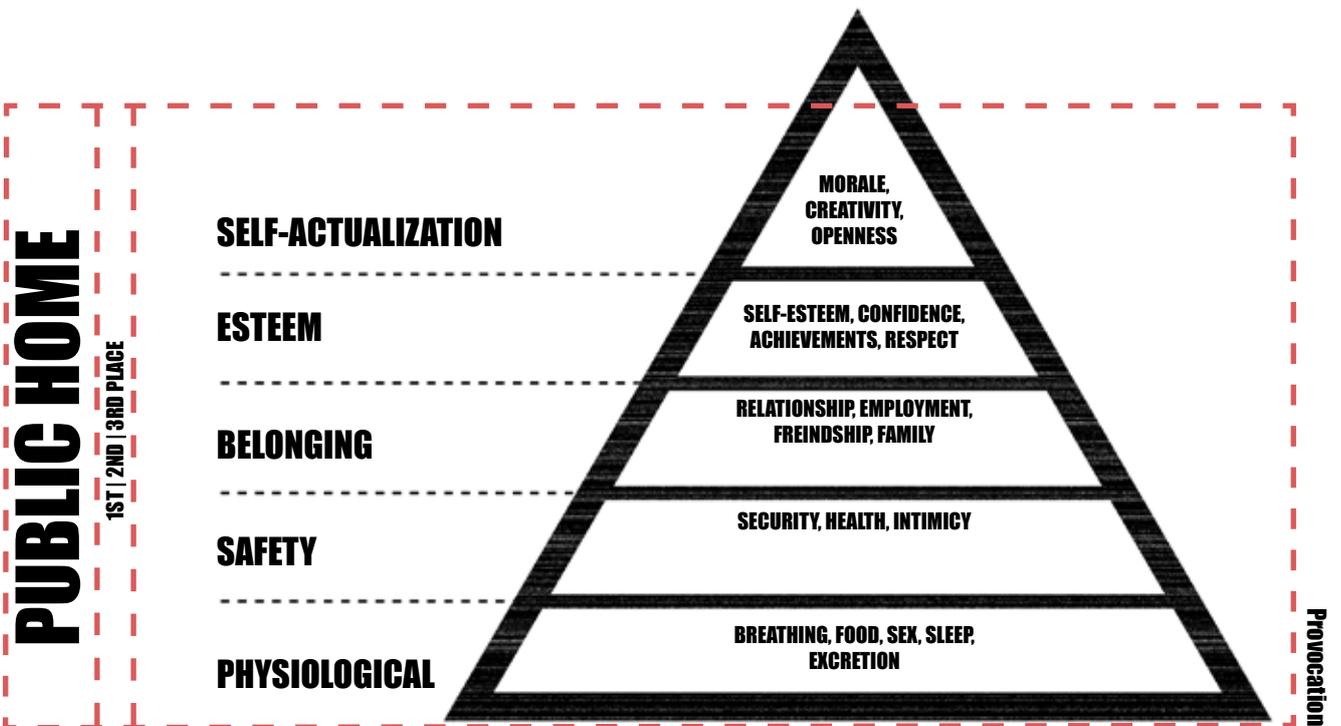
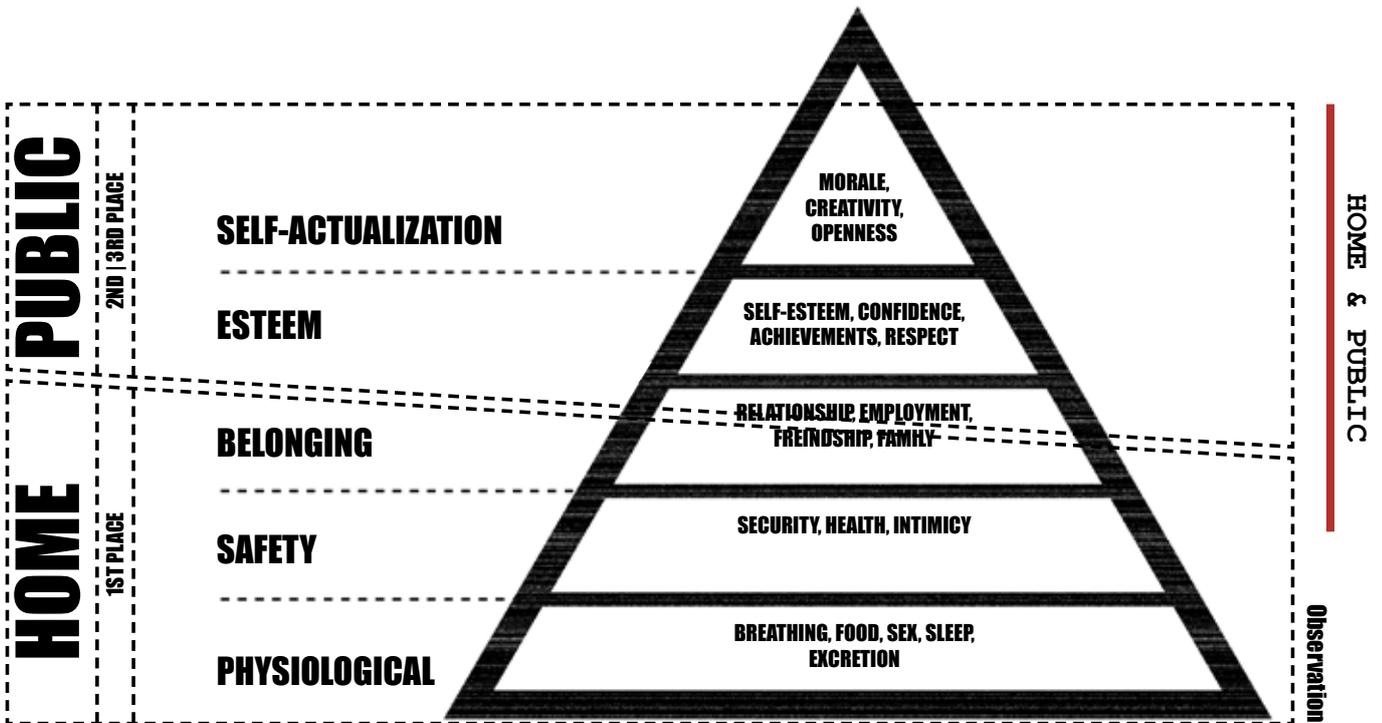


NIGHT #3

Night #3

I contacted a homeless shelter. I was asked: Are you homeless? Do you have a Swedish social security number? How long have you been homeless? I was directed to a shelter, but I did not feel that I could lie myself to a bed. Others might need it. I was walking around Röda Sten and Majorna. Everything is wet and cold. There are no good places to sleep. I went to Vasa Kyrkan. I slept in the entrance. It is covered and elevated from the ground. I felt safe and slept well there.





AN ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS OF HOME is done to inspire the design criteria (p. 70). Physical elements of the home is analyzed and renamed into a vocabulary that can be used in the design of public places and the centre against homelessness.

LOOKING TO ANALYZE THE NEED OF HOME one comes to think of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs (A. H. Maslow, 1954). The pyramid displays a hierarchy of needs that must be fulfilled from below. It is observed that much of these needs are fulfilled in the home, especially the ones at the foot of the pyramid. The second pyramid diagram is a provocation challenging this observation. Could the public place in fact cater for the full specter of personal needs? That effect would that have on the people living in homelessness?

INTERVIEWS with local supporting organisations within the field of homelessness where carried out. Questions revolved around the challenges and opportunities for interventions for the homeless in Gothenburg.

On the following pages key parts of the interviews are lifted out based on their relevance to the design criteria.

SOCIAL RESOURCES GÖTEBORG

MALIN ÖSTLING
Head of Operations
Housing and Social Services

“The homeless is a large diverse group, it doesn’t work to mix the group too much.”

“We have approx. 1100 positions on 40 addresses excluding the individual apartments.”

“We have many large challenges today. This is a time where we need to think differently.”

“We have to find ways to engage the new arrivals.”

“Gothenburg is a very segregated city.”

“We need to find ways to accept them and meet them as they are.”

“The homeless are excluded from public spaces so we need a type of space that they feel they can take.”

“I think a contact centre or a centre against homeless can be a part of the solution. A meeting place where they feel welcome and where they can find meaningful activities.”

RÄDDNINGSS MISSIONEN GÖTEBORG

ANNIKA STRÖM
ÖBERG
Head of Operations
Homelessness

“A strong social network is fundamental for finding the way out of homelessness.”

“Many rough sleepers have lost trust in the authorities.”

“They still get stigmatized if we say that they need a specific environment.”

“Long term unemployment is a risk factor for ending up in homelessness.”

“People must be able to live their own way.”

“We must adapt what we build to the “right” to have a home.”

“Housing first is a big opportunity.”

“Preventing evictions is an important task.”

RÄDDNINGSS MISSIONEN GÖTEBORG

ROBERT
JOHANSSON
Homelessness Coordinator

“I have been homeless for five years on the streets of Gothenburg.”

“I got some structure back in my life through addiction counselling and courses.”

“Räddningsmissionens morning café, we call it a social café, have between 140 and 180 users 4 days a week.”

“The Café provide breakfast, shower, social and religious counselling and clothes.”

“I find that big rooms can mean big problems. Small rooms help to create relations.”

“We have to think how to solve the fundamental problems coursing the homelessness.”

“We could enhance the quality of life if we looked at the whole picture of the homeless person.”

“I see a need for a more direct contact between the deciding agents and the person in need.”

S T A D S MISSIONEN GÖTEBORG

LENNART
FORSBERG
Social Director

“We do not have sufficient housing in Gothenburg today.”

“When we discuss housing first we often question, what’s next?”

“Many of our users have a place to live, but they come to us to find a social network”

“In a segregated city such as Gothenburg one can see that not all has access to the central city.”

“Not all can take an active part in the cultural and economic life in Gothenburg.”

“If we place all the homeless together in one location (without mixing) I think it will become messy for them.”

“Not all are made for living in their own box. They need common spaces for interaction.”

“You need to be able to close your own door and at the same time have the knowledge that there are someone outside.”

FAKTUM GÖTEBORG

SARAH BRITZ
Editor in Chief

“Faktum should be a way out. A way to get a live where you are in charge.”

“A lot are coming to us to break with social isolation, to take a cup of coffee and to get support from the Faktum Lawyers.”

“We meet them in eye height and know our boundaries.”

“Selling Faktum is a job, an activity and a way to earn the extra bills that help them to maintain a safe (economic) base.”

“There is a large range of different people that need an extra income and a social network.”

“We are working on raising awareness within homelessness and especially within the new form of homelessness we see.”

“There is a difference between being homeless and not having a place to live.”

“The conflicts on the street is a big challenge.”

PROPERTY COMMITTEE GÖTEBORG

MIKAEL CHRONA
Development Leader
&
LARS-GUNNAR
KRANTZ
Development Leader

“We need solutions for making a calm place for interaction between different people.”

“We don’t need to divide the homeless and the rest of us.”

“we need to gather a large amount of different support and make it more accessible.”

“We could call it a house of opportunities, because it is not us who should set the frame of possibilities but we should inform and let it be up to the individual.”

“We asked the homeless what they wanted and most of them answered a place to live.”

“We have to offer a choice of activities because if they want out they often have to leave their network (of other addicts or homeless friends) and they often get lonely.”

“People coming here (to Sweden) without a social network and few means are in the risk of becoming homeless.”

RÄDDNINGSS MISSIONEN GÖTEBORG

EVA
ERLANDSSON
Deacon

INFORMAL TALK

“Low threshold meeting places are necessary.”

“Don’t define the homeless as “them” but rather as a part of “us”.”

“Instead of thinking in activities for just them, think of activities for all.”



CHALMERS
UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

ARCHITECTURE